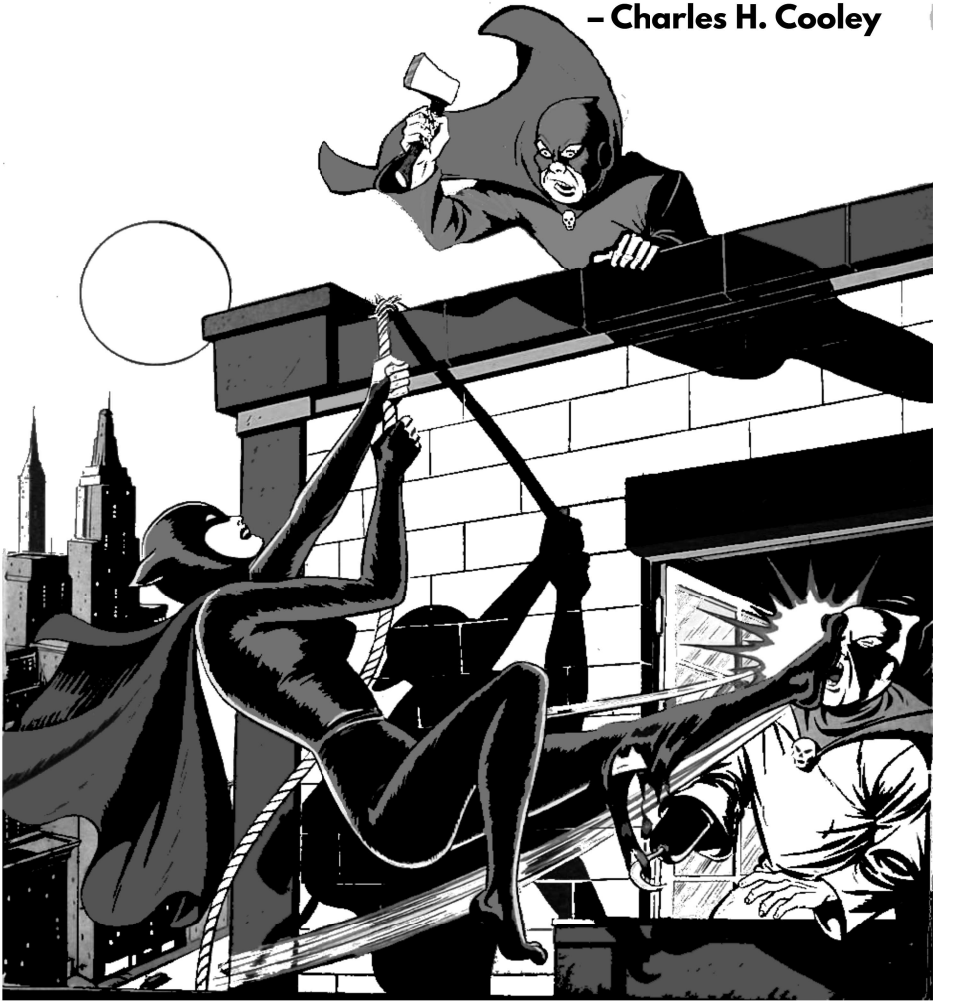
PHASERIP
FORMATTING TEST

CHAPTER I

WHEN WAKES THE PROTAGONIST!

"To have no heroes is to have no aspiration, to live on the momentum of the past, to be thrown back upon routine, desire, and the narrow self."

– Charles H. Cooley



ECHELONS

An Echelon is a single-word descriptor or adjective, used as the standard measure of potency or effectiveness.

Echelons are representative of a scale of one to ten, quantifying everything from time to weight to distance. This makes it easier to find the Echelon of any real world equivalent, as most people are familiar with valuing or describing things on a one to ten scale in our daily lives.

ECHELON		RANK	RATING
Feeble	FB	1	1
Puny	PU	2	2
Typical	TY	3	3
Good	GD	4	5
Excellent	EX	5	10
Legendary	LG	6	15
Uncanny	UC	7	25
Fantastic	FA	8	40
Amazing	AM	9	60
Incredible	IN	10	100

For example, the heat of a flame, from a lit match (Feeble) to the inside of a volcano (Incredible), or the height of a precipice, from an anthill (Feeble) to Mount Everest (Incredible).

Rather than definitive measures, Echelons are benchmarks representing a range of values, similar to weight classes in sports. Echelons are presented as broad categories to facilitate judgments on a case-by-case basis, as the very nature of Heroism is that characters are constantly pushing and redefining their limits.

RANKS & RATINGS

Each Echelon is associated with two numbers; it's **Rank** and **Rating**.

An Echelon's **Rank** is simply it's position on the one to ten scale, so the Typical Echelon is Rank 3 and Amazing is Rank 9. An Echelon's **Rating**, on the other hand, features a much broader number scale, from 1 (Feeble) up to 100 (Incredible).

> Echelon Ratings are based upon the Fibonacci sequence, an algorithm representing a spiral pattern commonly found in nature wherein each number is the sum of the 2 numbers preceding it. Technically, this means the Echelon Ratings should be 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, and 89, but to make calculations during the game easier, the numbers are rounded.

THESE GO TO ELEVEN...

Each Echelon corresponds to a column on **The Action Resolution Graph!** (**ARG!**). However, looking at The ARG! you might notice several Echelons besides the ten already mentioned. These are the **Shift Echelons**, so named as it is possible for characters to temporarily increase or decrease ("shift") their Echelons to these levels depending on circumstances during game-play.

ECHELON		RANK	RATING
Minimal	MN	0	1
Feeble	FB	1	1
Puny	PU	2	2
Typical	TY	3	3
Good	GD	4	5
Excellent	EX	5	10
Legendary	LG	6	15
Uncanny	UC	7	25
Fantastic	FA	8	40
Amazing	AM	9	60
Incredible	IN	10	100
Unearthly	UN	15	150
Stellar	ST	25	250
Cosmic	CS	50	400
Celestial	CE	75	600
Beyond	BY	100	1000

Below Feeble is **Minimal (MN)**, describing subtleties below most people's notice, such as the strength of an insect, or a spark from a match.

Above Incredible are the Echelons **Unearthly (UN)**, **Stellar (ST)**, **Cosmic (CS)**, **Celestial (CE)** and **Beyond (BY)**, designating increasing levels of potency used to describe powerful universal forces.

Roughly speaking, *Unearthly* equates to the power level or mass of a planet; *Stellar* to that of the sun or a star. *Cosmic* and *Celestial* describe forces equivalent to a galaxy or universe, respectively, while *Beyond* represents near-infinite or godlike powers far beyond mortal ken.

Only rarely will any Hero, or any character that they encounter, possess Attributes assigned Shift Echelons, outside of very high power level games.

It is important to note that shifting to an Echelon, via circumstantial modifiers or bonuses from Traits, does not confer any of the implications of that Echelon, it merely represents an increased chance of success.

For example, a Hero with Incredible Strength who receives a bonus that allows them to roll on the Stellar Echelon, cannot suddenly lift a Stellar amount of weight, they are simply ***more likely*** *to lift an Incredible amount.*

ATTRIBUTES

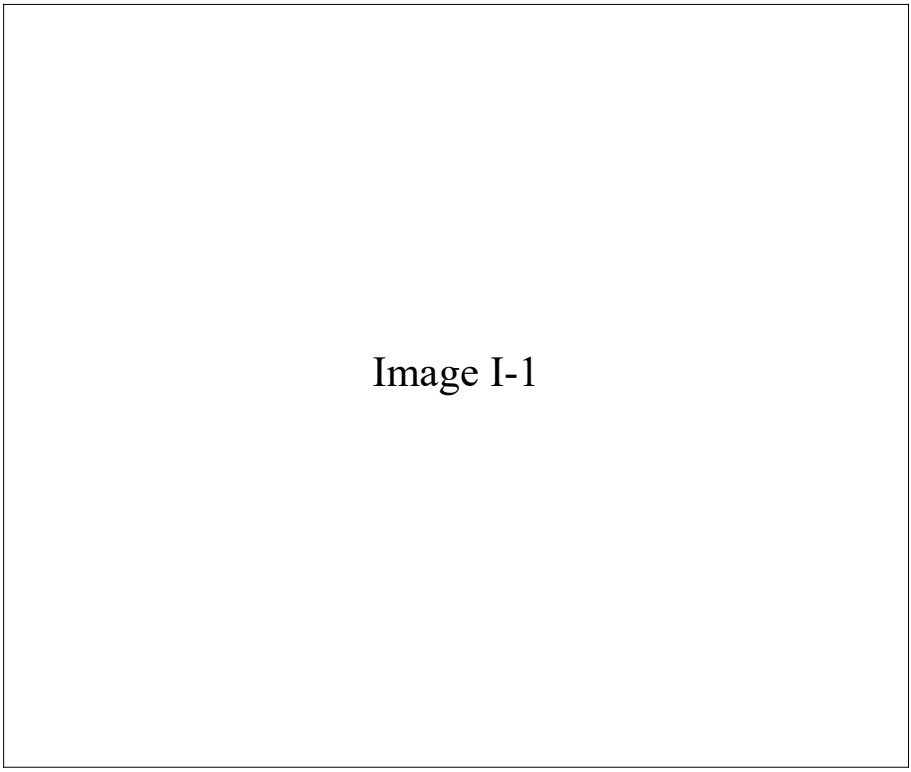
An Attribute is any characteristic or advantage/disadvantage a Hero possesses that is quantified by Echelons. They are organized into three broad categories:

Primary Attributes are qualities shared by all Heroes, providing an overall evaluation of their physical and mental capacities.

Secondary Attributes are optional qualities that usually represent external or social advantages such as wealth and fame.

Special Attributes are unique advantages or disadvantages possessed by a Hero, including superhuman powers and weaknesses.

These categories are purely organizational, to allow ease of reference, they play little to no role in the game.



PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES

There are 7 Primary Attributes, representing common qualities or characteristics inherent to all Heroes: **Fighting (F)**, **Agility (A)**, **Strength (S)**, and **Endurance (E)**, which are a Hero's *Physical Attributes,* and **Reason (R)**, **Intuition (I)** and **Psyche (P)**, comprising a Hero's *Mental Attributes*.

Fighting (F)

Represents a Hero's training and experience in hand to hand combat.

Agility (A)

Assesses a Hero's coordination and reflexes.

Strength (S)

A measure of a Hero's physical might.

Endurance (E)

Indicates a Hero's constitution and durability.

Reason (R)

Evaluates a Hero's problem-solving and technical knowhow.

Intuition (I)

Signifies a Hero's wits and perceptiveness.

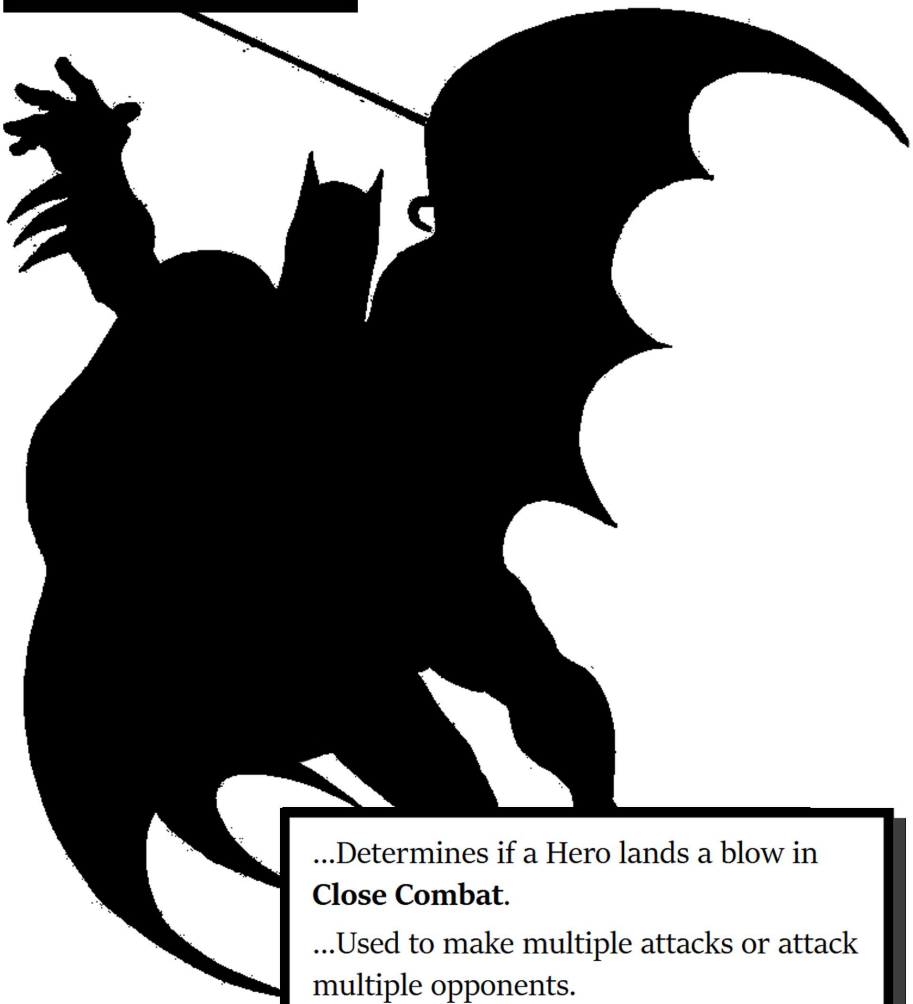
Psyche (P)

Represents a Hero's will power and mental fortitude.

Each Attribute is an assigned an Echelon, reflecting the Hero's degree of capability and training in that area.

It is worth reiterating that Echelons do not represent objective measurements, rather categories or classes. A Hero will not know the exact amount of weight that they can lift, but they will know if they are comparable to an Olympic weightlifter capable of lifting several hundred pounds, or a superhuman capable of lifting several tonnes.

FIGHTING



...Determines if a Hero lands a blow in **Close Combat**.

...Used to make multiple attacks or attack multiple opponents.

...Used to **Evade** or **Parry** an attack.

...Used to perform Combat Stunts.

...Determines a Hero's **Stamina Factor**.

FEEBLE

Hopeless in a physical fight.
Pop Culture Examples: C3P0

PUNY

Meek, avoiding confrontations whenever possible.
Pop Culture Examples: Arthur Dent, Morty Smith, Rusty Venture

TYPICAL

Able to throw a punch when necessary.
Pop Culture Examples: Deadly Girl, Kitty Pryde, Marty McFly

GOOD

Possessing some fighting experience or basic self-defence training.
Pop Culture Examples: Han Solo, Plastic Man

EXCELLENT

Prowess equivalent to that of a trained soldier or martial artist.
Pop Culture Examples: Aeryn Sun, The Phantom

LEGENDARY

Master of several martial arts styles
Pop Culture Examples: Brock Sampson,

UNCANNY

Lifelong experience combined with superior talent.
Pop Culture Examples: Superman, Wolverine

FANTASTIC

Deadly: the ultimate human fighting machine.
Pop Culture Examples: Batman, Captain America, Conan

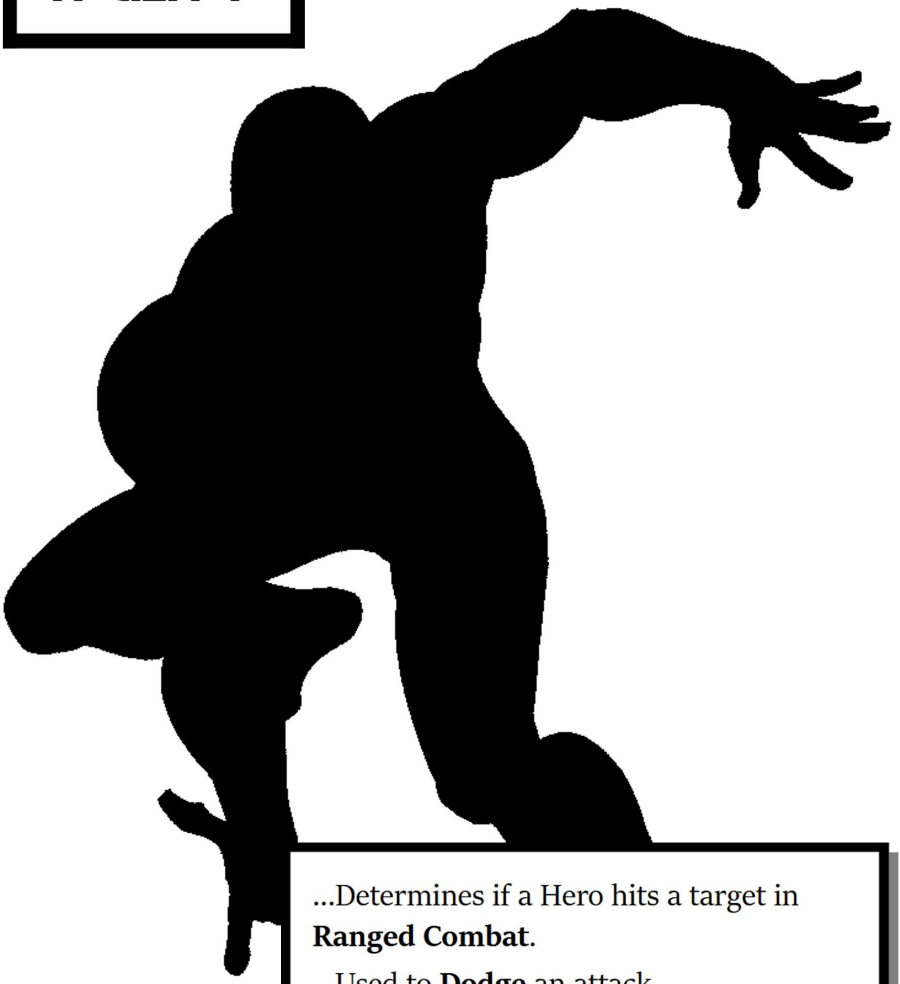
AMAZING

Superhuman talent combined with lifetimes of experience.
Pop-Culture Examples: Thor, Wonder Woman

INCREDIBLE

Nigh-invincible, possessing incalculable combat prowess.
Pop-Culture Example: Chuck Norris

AGILITY



...Determines if a Hero hits a target in **Ranged Combat**.

...Used to **Dodge** an attack.

....Used to climb a wall, catch an object, any action requiring reflexes/coordination.

...Used to drive or pilot a vehicle.

...Determine a Hero's **Stamina Factor**.

FEEBLE

Severely uncoordinated, finding it difficult to move.

Pop-Culture Example:

PUNY

Clumsy and slow to react.

Pop-Culture Examples: Frankenstein's Monster, The Hulk

TYPICAL

Possessing average coordination and reflexes of a human adult.

Pop-Culture Examples: John Constantine, Peter Venkman

GOOD

Equivalent to someone who engages in regular athletic activities.

Pop-Culture Examples: Hellboy, Jem, Sherlock Holmes

EXCELLENT

Equivalent to an Olympic athlete.

Pop-Culture Examples: Chiana, Hal Jordan, Wolverine

LEGENDARY

Peak human agility, equivalent to an Olympic acrobat.

Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, Daredevil, Tarzan

UNCANNY

Inhuman dexterity, able to dodge a bullet at close range.

Pop-Culture Examples: Black Panther,

FANTASTIC

Superhuman legerity and reflexes.

Pop-Culture Examples: Nightcrawler, Wonder Woman

AMAZING

Capable of acrobatic maneuvers seeming
to defy the limits of the humanoid structure.

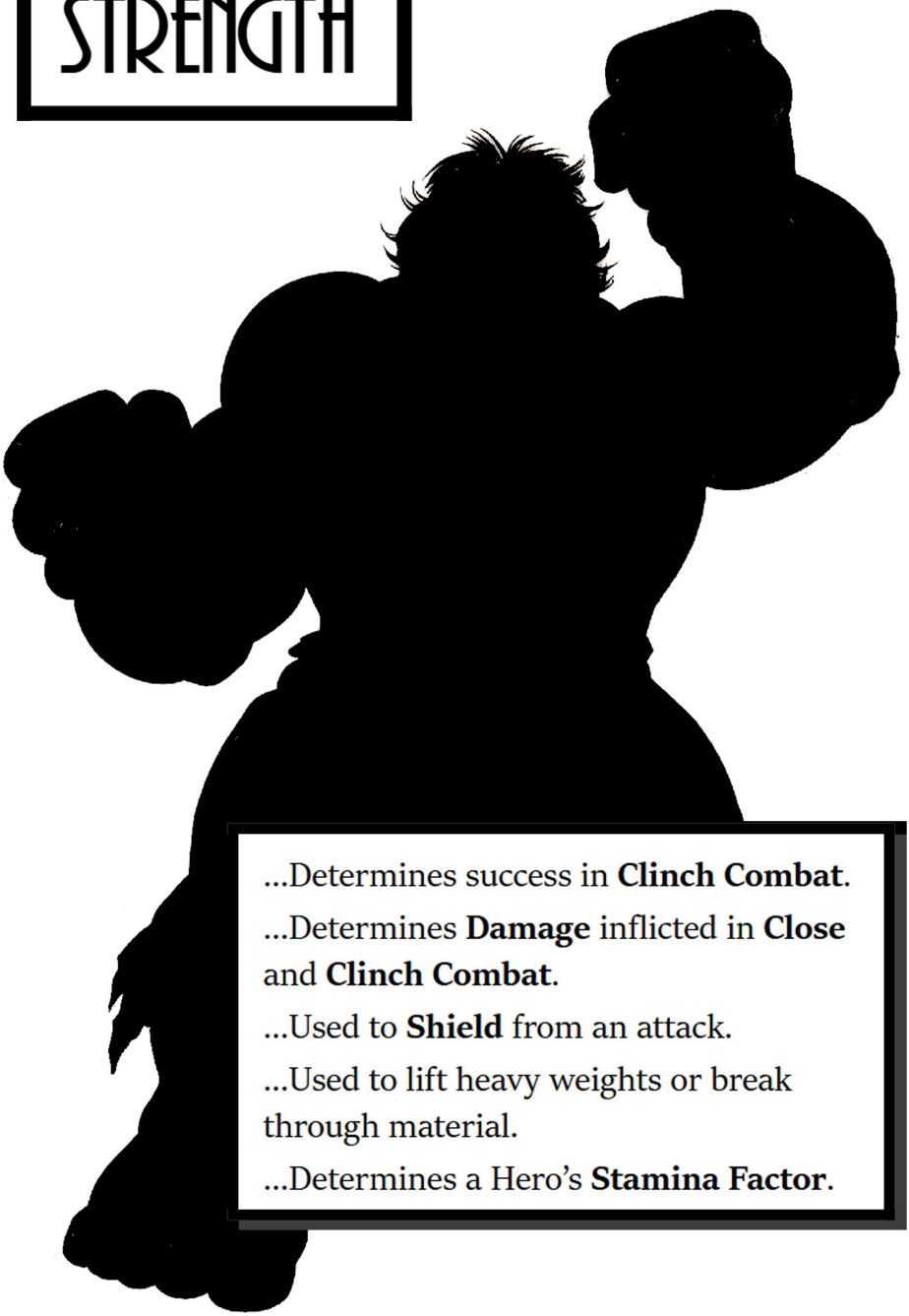
Pop-Culture Examples: Gatchaman, Jack Hawksmoor, Spider-man

INCREDIBLE

Possessing complete control over their body's movements.

Pop-Culture Example: Plasticman

STRENGTH



...Determines success in **Clinch Combat**.

...Determines **Damage** inflicted in **Close** and **Clinch Combat**.

...Used to **Shield** from an attack.

...Used to lift heavy weights or break through material.

...Determines a Hero's **Stamina Factor**.

FEEBLE

Flaccid, requiring help to open the lid on a jar of jam.
Pop-Culture Example: Dominar Rygel XVI

PUNY

Weak, incapable of lifting the body weight of a human adult.
Pop-Culture Examples: Sailor Moon, Timothy Hunter

TYPICAL

Possessing the average might of a healthy human adult.
Pop-Culture Examples: Doctor Strange, Zatanna

GOOD

Equivalent to a professional athlete.
Pop-Culture Examples: The Flash, The Spirit

EXCELLENT

Equivalent to an Olympic weightlifter.
Pop-Culture Examples: Captain America, Red Sonja

LEGENDARY

Mythical might, capable of lifting a car.
Pop-Culture Examples: Luke Cage, Robocop

UNCANNY

Superhuman might, capable of lifting an elephant.
Pop-Culture Examples: Spider-man, Steel

FANTASTIC

Metahuman strength, capable of rupturing a steel door.
Pop-Culture Examples: Hellboy, She-Hulk

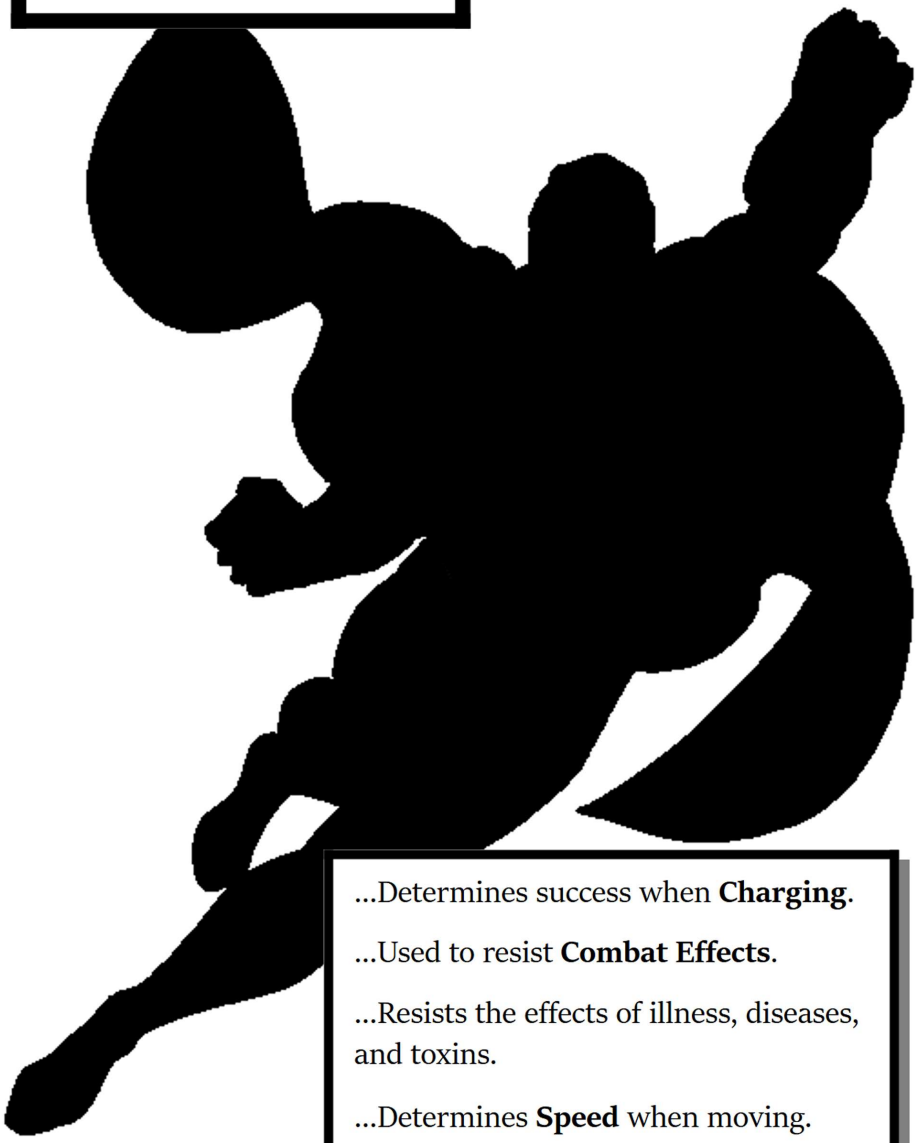
AMAZING

Titanic might, capable of lifting or crushing a tank.
Pop-Culture Examples: The Thing

INCREDIBLE

Monstrous might, capable of crushing titanium or lifting a train.
Pop-Culture Example: Godzilla

ENDURANCE



...Determines success when **Charging**.

...Used to resist **Combat Effects**.

...Resists the effects of illness, diseases, and toxins.

...Determines **Speed** when moving.

...Determines a Hero's **Stamina Factor**.

FEEBLE

Frail, easily injured and capable of little physical exertion.

Pop-Culture Example: Aunt May

PUNY

Below-average constitution, easily winded.

Pop-Culture Examples: Alicia Masters, Woozy Winks

TYPICAL

Average adult who engages in moderate regular exercise.

Pop-Culture Examples: Howard the Duck, Sailor Moon

GOOD

Adult who engages in intensive regular exercise.

Pop-Culture Examples: Ant-Man, Ballgirl

EXCELLENT

Tough; constitution equivalent to a professional athlete.

Pop-Culture Examples: Catwoman, D'Argo

LEGENDARY

Conditioned to withstand the greatest amount of pain humanly possible.

Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, James Bond

UNCANNY

Enhanced, able to weather attacks from conventional weaponry.

Pop-Culture Examples: Big Barda, Spider-man

FANTASTIC

Capable of weathering attacks from military-grade weaponry.

Pop-Culture Examples: Cyborg, She-Hulk

AMAZING

Near-indestructible.

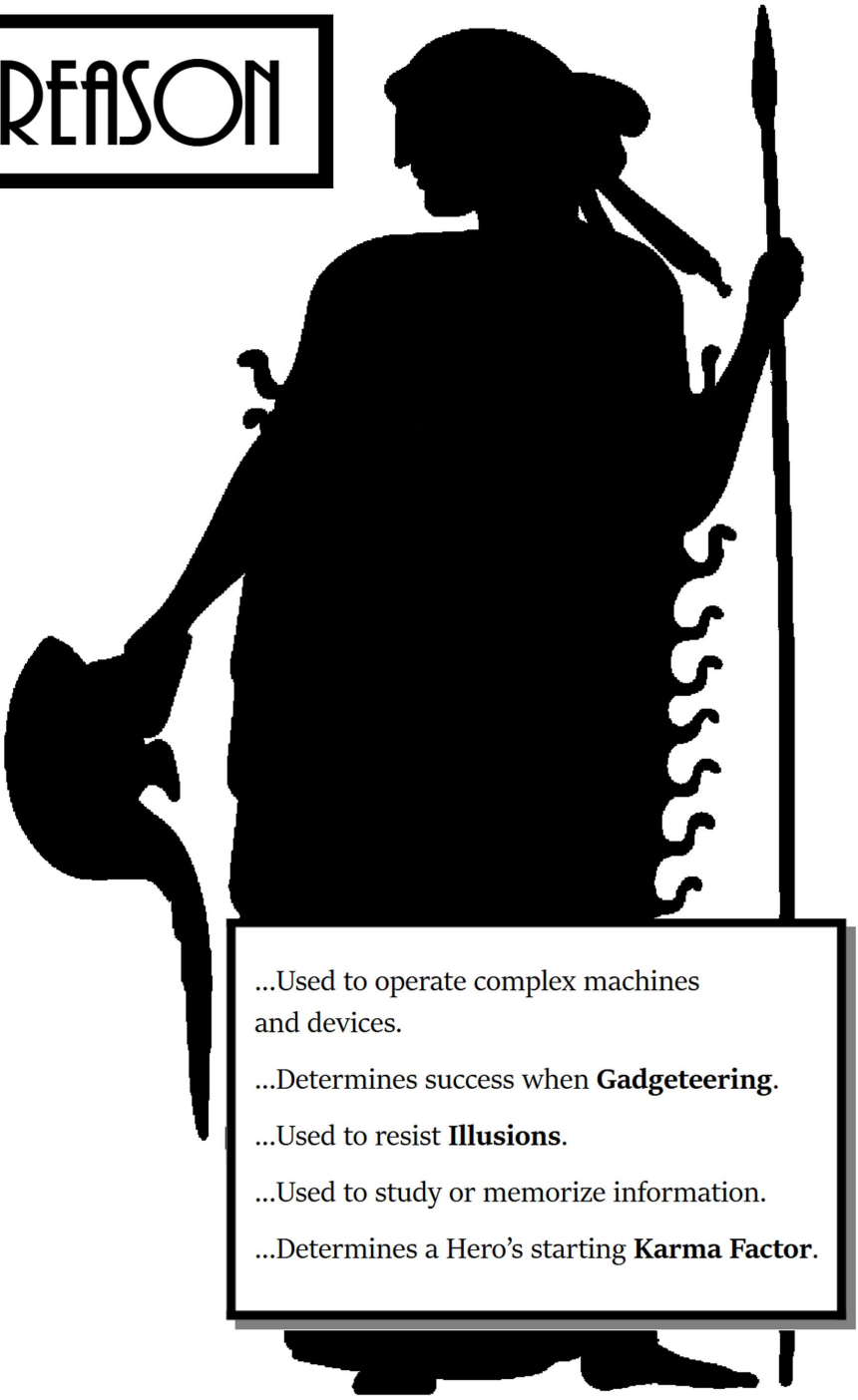
Pop-Culture Examples: The Thing, The Tick

INCREDIBLE

Nigh impossible to permanently injure.

Pop-Culture Example: Superman

REASON



...Used to operate complex machines and devices.

...Determines success when **Gadgeteering**.

...Used to resist **Illusions**.

...Used to study or memorize information.

...Determines a Hero's starting **Karma Factor**.

FEEBLE

Slow on the uptake and easily confused.

Pop-Culture Example: The Hulk

PUNY

Simple, tending to direct approaches for complex problems.

Pop-Culture Examples: The Maxx, The Tick

TYPICAL

Average, capable of using modern technology.

Pop-Culture Examples: Hellboy, Wolverine

GOOD

Sharp, equivalent to a diligent university student.

Pop-Culture Examples: Captain America, Wonder Woman

EXCELLENT

Gifted; possessing natural scientific aptitude.

Pop-Culture Examples: Batgirl, Kitty Pryde

LEGENDARY

Equivalent to a university professor.

Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, The Beast

UNCANNY

Equivalent to a leading authority in the world on a subject.

Pop-Culture Examples: Cyborg, Professor X

FANTASTIC

Genius; conceives concepts far beyond current conventions.

Pop-Culture Example: Buckaroo Banzai, Iron Man

AMAZING

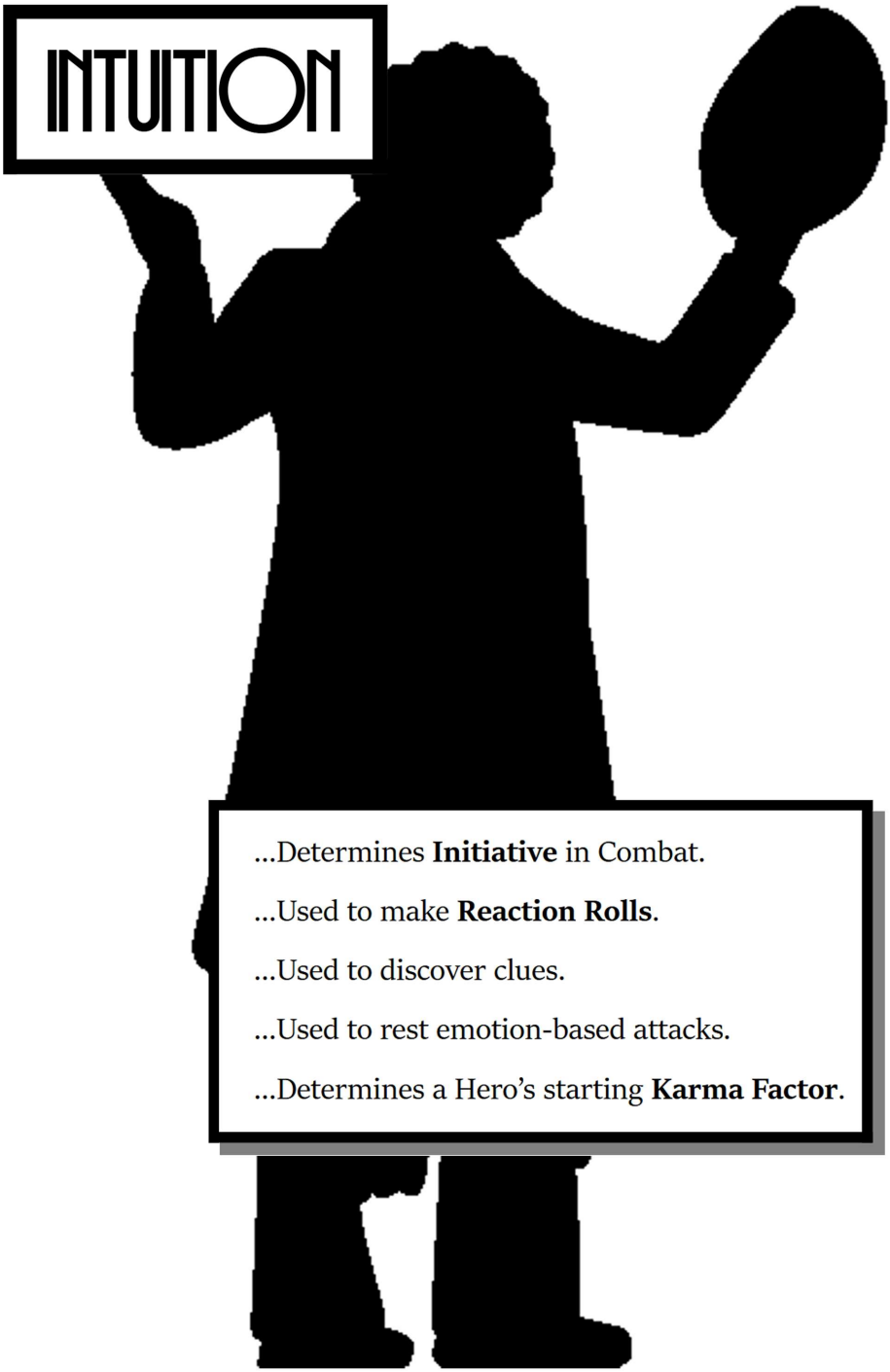
Super-Genius; genius-level proficiency in multiple disciplines and the capacity to adopt scientific concepts completely foreign to their society.

Pop-Culture Examples: Dr. Jonas Venture, Mister Fantastic

INCREDIBLE

Master of all worldly knowledge.

Pop-Culture Example:


INTUITION
...Determines **Initiative** in Combat.
...Used to make **Reaction Rolls**.
...Used to discover clues.
...Used to rest emotion-based attacks.
...Determines a Hero's starting **Karma Factor**.

FEEBLE

Oblivious to surroundings, with limited or impaired senses.

Pop-Culture Example: Man-Thing

PUNY

Easily distracted and often caught of-guard.

Pop-Culture Examples: Space Ghost, The Tick

TYPICAL

Average situational awareness.

Pop-Culture Examples: Captain Britain, Plastic Man

GOOD

Observant, with an eye for detail.

Pop-Culture Examples: Green Lantern, Rocket Raccoon

EXCELLENT

Empathetic, sensitive to surroundings.

Pop-Culture Examples: Kitty Pryde, Zatanna

LEGENDARY

Possessing natural detective abilities.

Pop-Culture Example: Elongated Man, The Spirit, Wendy Watson

UNCANNY

Perspicacious, superior observational skills.

Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, Sherlock Holmes

FANTASTIC

Senses of animal acuteness.

Pop-Culture Examples: Beast Boy, Wolverine

AMAZING

Sensory awareness far exceeding human limitations.

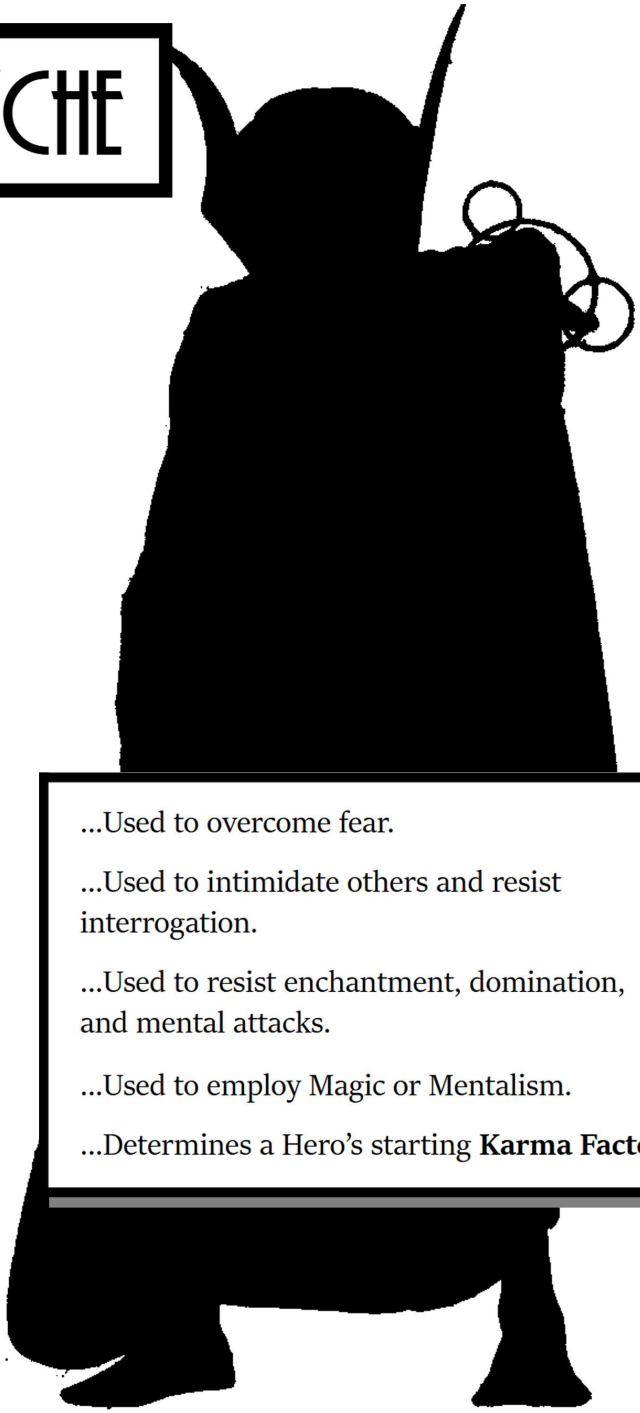
Pop-Culture Examples: Daredevil, Superman

INCREDIBLE

In tune with the universe, perceptive of cosmic disturbances.

Pop-Culture Example: Doctor Who

PSYCHE



...Used to overcome fear.

...Used to intimidate others and resist interrogation.

...Used to resist enchantment, domination, and mental attacks.

...Used to employ Magic or Mentalism.

...Determines a Hero's starting **Karma Factor**.

FEEBLE

Meek, easily influenced and dominated.

Pop-Culture Example: Meatwad

PUNY

Weak-willed, without a strong sense of self.

Pop-Culture Examples: Dean Venture, Rogue

TYPICAL

Confidently confronts the obstacles and anxieties of everyday life.

Pop-Culture Examples: Arthur Dent, Deadly Girl

GOOD

Brave, with the will to resists basic mesmerism.

Pop-Culture Examples: Daredevil, The Spirit

EXCELLENT

Intrepid; remains calm and collected during a major crisis.

Pop-Culture Examples: Black Widow, The Flash

LEGENDARY

Daring, sufficient will to override self-preservation instincts.

Pop-Culture Examples: Spider-man

UNCANNY

Able to confront mystical phenomena with no loss of resolve.

Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, Red Sonja

FANTASTIC

Indomitable, able to resist most forms of mind control.

Pop-Culture Examples: Captain America,

AMAZING

A will formidable enough to challenge intergalactic or inter- dimensional menaces with no loss of resolve.

Pop-Culture Examples: Doctor Who, Green Lantern

INCREDIBLE

Godlike resolve, practically impossible to influence or dominate.

Pop-Culture Example: Doctor Strange

SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES
(optional rules)

Secondary Attributes are options that cover several external aspects of Heroes' lives. Functionally, they work the same as Primary Attributes; each is assigned an Echelon which determines their level of advantage.

A Judge can utilize all or none of these as appropriate to the game in question. *Resources, for example, are appropriate for modern games, where Heroes often have salaries, savings accounts, budgets, and lines of credit. It is less appropriate for a game set in the Middle Ages, where Heroes are unlikely to possess more than a few coins at a given time, or a post-apocalyptic future where barter and trade is the main form of commerce.*

RESOURCES

Resources provides an abstract evaluation of a Hero's financial status. Resources are used to purchase items or services and, more generally, to determine a Hero's standard of living. A Hero with low Resources is always struggling to pay rent and bills, and usually cannot afford many luxuries, while a character with high Resources lives a privileged life of ease.

FEEBLE
Poor; irregular income or student

PUNY
Working Class.

TYPICAL
Lower Middle class.

GOOD
Middle class with professional employment.

EXCELLENT
Upper middle class, small business owner.

LEGENDARY
Millionaire or small corporation.

UNCANNY
Upper class or large business owner.

FANTASTIC
Billionaire or small military.

AMAZING
Trillionaire, major country or military.

INCREDIBLE
Plutonian; near limitless wealth.

RENOWN

Renown is an approximation of how popular and well-known a Hero is, including their general reputation for honesty and fair play. Renown can increase and decrease frequently during play as the Hero's actions and events in the game affect the public's perception of the Hero.

Renown primarily influences how other characters react to the Hero and how likely they are to trust them. A Hero with high Renown will find it easy to get aid or assistance, while one with low Renown will find many people react to them with fear or mistrust.

Defeating a villain in public, saving lives, or doing charity work will increase a Hero's Renown. On the other hand, getting publicly defeated by a villain, failing to save a life or prevent a crime, or committing a crime, will lower a Hero's Renown. **Chapter V: Excelsior** covers Renown in more detail.

CONTACTS

Some Heroes rely heavily on a diverse group of informants, allies, and confidants to aid them in their adventures and investigations. This Secondary Attribute "Contacts" is one manner of dealing with this simply during a game.

The Contacts attribute is assigned an Echelon, representing the size, variety, and usefulness of a Hero's social network.

A Hero can specify a specific group that their Contacts belong to, which gives them a bonus while restricting their opportunities to call on help.

A Hero with **Excellent Contacts (Military)** *treats their Contacts Echelon as* Legendary *when trying to find someone who can help them among active and retired members of the Armed Forces, but would not have access to Contacts in the academic, entertainment, or business sectors.*

When not using this Secondary Attribute, a Hero's Contacts are detailed individually. Likewise, a Hero can "burn" an Echelon of their Contacts Attribute to permanently establish an individual Contact.

Resources are covered in more detail in **Chapter IV: Tools of the Trade**, while **Chapter V: Excelsior** expands on *Renown* and *Contacts*.

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

Special Attributes are unique to each Hero, representing a particular advantage or drawback defining the Hero. Special Attributes are rated by an Echelon that represents their potency, versatility or severity.

Special Attributes often involve individual or idiosyncratic rules so they are each described in detail in their individual chapters.

QUIRKS

A Hero's **Super Powers, Extraordinary Abilities**, and **Weaknesses**, along with peripheral advantages such as an **Animal Companion**. **Quirks** are detailed in **Chapter III: Thus Spake Zarathustra**.

OBLIGATIONS

Personal connections and relationships that provide Heroes benefits while making their lives more complicated. **Obligations** are detailed in **Chapter V: Excelsior**.

PARAPHERNALIA

Encompasses **Gadgets**, **Weapons**, and **Vehicles,** along with Supertech such **Cybernetics**, **Battlesuits**, and **Mecha**. Paraphernalia are detailed in **Chapter IV: Tools of the Trade** and **Chapter VI: More Human Than Human**.

XIULIAN

Includes **Qi Powers** and Advanced **Martial Arts Techniques**. **Xiulian** are detailed in **Chapter VIII: Real Ultimate Power**.

MAGIC

Encompasses the occult arts such **Alchemy**, **Sorcery**, **Shamanism**, **Witchcraft** and **Wizardry**, along with enchanted items. Magic is detailed in **Chapter IX: Tales From The Black Museum**

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FACTORS

Whereas Attributes are quantified by an Echelon, Factors are characteristics that are represented by a point total that can decrease or increase frequently during the course of play, referred to as a "pool" of points.

Factors include **Stamina**, **Karma**, and **Continuity**.

STAMINA

Stamina represents a Hero's overall survivability, and their passive (or reactive) ability to defend against or weather attacks.

A Hero's Stamina Pool is equal to the sum of the Echelon Ratings of their *Physical Attributes* (**F+A+S+E**). *So a Hero with* Typical *Fighting, Agility, Might, and Durability, each with an Echelon Rating of* 3*, would possesses a starting Stamina pool of* 12 *points.*

Stamina points are spent by the Hero to mitigate **Damage**. Damage is most often inflicted by attacks in Combat, but can come from any event that inflicts injury or fatigue. If a Hero's Stamina Pool reaches zero, they are incapable of physical action and are in danger of receiving a critical or mortal **Wound**.

Damage and **Wounds** are detailed in **Chapter II: Vs The World**.

KARMA

Karma represents a Hero's ability to influence luck and fate through sheer will.

A Hero's Karma pool is a resource that a Hero may draw upon to ensure the success of certain actions and the performance of heroic feats. The Hero will earn Karma points (and possibly suffer **Karma Loss**) during the game.

A Hero's starting Karma Pool is equal to the sum of the Echelon Ratings of their *Mental Attributes* (**R+I+P**). *So a Hero with* Typical *Reason, Intuition, and Psyche, each with an Echelon Rating of* 3*, would possesses a starting Karma Pool of* 9 *points.*

A Hero's Karma Pool will refresh daily, after , up to the total of their starting amount unless their current Karma Pool is larger (in which case this amount is retained until spent or lost).

An exception exists if a Hero's Karma is currently in the negative due to Karma Loss. A negative Karma Pool will not refresh until the Hero **Atones** for whatever actions caused the pool to drop below zero.
If any of the Hero's Mental Attributes permanently gain or lose an Echelon during the course of game play, the Hero must recalculate their starting Karma Pool based on the new sum of Echelon Ratings before the next time their Karma Pool is refreshed.

Note also that some Heroes accept a darker path that does not include much in the way of Karma. These **Antiheroes** must compensate for this by making use of their other advantages. An antihero does not constantly keep track of negative Karma, they are simply cut off from the concept altogether.

Karma, **Karma Loss**, and **Atonement**
are detailed in **Chapter III: Thus Spake Zarathustra**.

CONTINUITY
(optional rule)

Continuity is a way of tracking a Hero's progression and growth over the course of a campaign.

Each Hero starts the game with one point of Continuity, and earns an additional point of Continuity when they fail at certain rolls during the game.

A Hero may spend Continuity points to improve their Attributes, learn new skills and perform **Power Stunts**, or to trigger a **Fate Roll**.

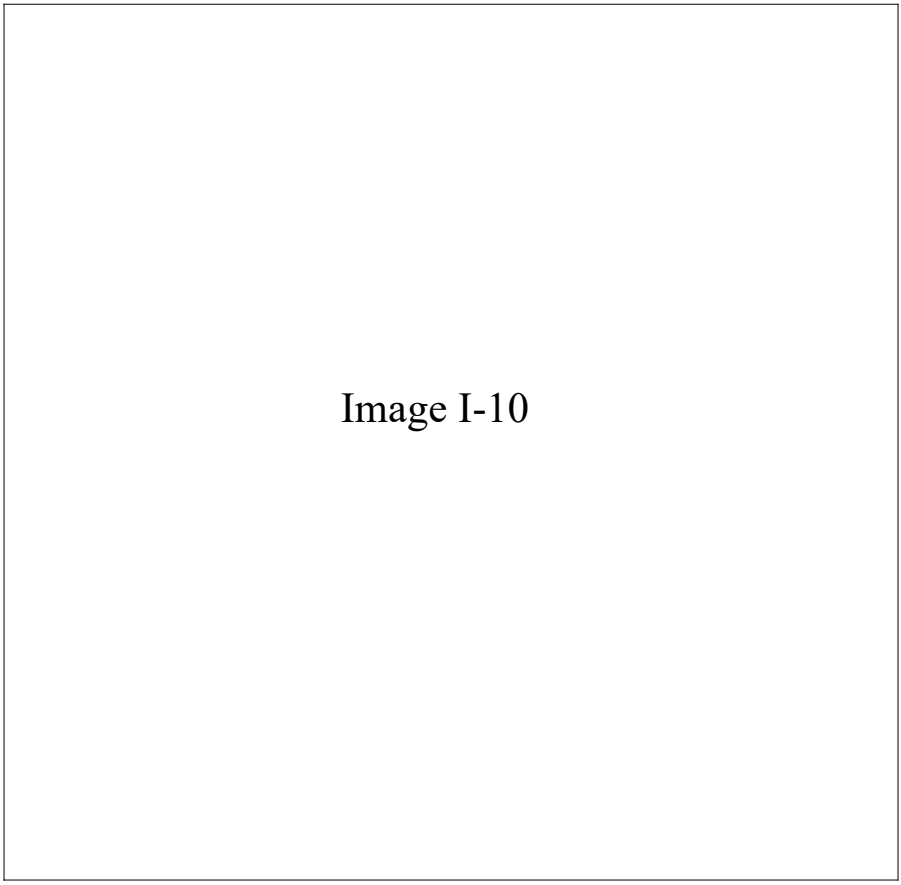
Continuity and **Fate Rolls** are discussed in **Chapter V: Excelsior**,
Power Stunts are detailed in **Chapter III: Thus Spake Zarathustra**.

TRAITS

"Trait" is a catch-all term for any characteristic that is neither rated by an Echelon nor represented by a pool of points. A Hero either possesses a Trait or does not. Each Trait provides a benefit or hindrance in specific situations that a Hero may encounter.

Traits are divided into three categories:

- **Talents** – Specific areas of skill or proficiency wherein the Hero excels.
- **Standard Traits** – Providing basic descriptions of the Hero.
- **Special Traits** – Unique qualities defining the Hero.



TALENTS

The most common type of Trait, Talents indicate a Hero's aptitudes, skills, and areas of expertise. Talents are generally broad in scope and assume competence in a wide variety of related disciplines.

SPECIALTIES

Specialties are narrower in focus than Talents. A Hero may know a bit about all forms of Science, but particularly excel at Chemistry. Specialization trades the advantage of wide applicability for increased priority.

Each Talent description includes a list of example Specialties. These lists are not exhaustive, and Players should feel free to invent their own Specialties.

Functionally, both Talents and Specialties operate the same, providing a modifier to a Hero's rolls in applicable situations, in the form of **Phase Shifts** (for *active* employment of a Talent) and **Echelon Shits** (for *passive* use of a Talent).

> **Phase Shifts**, **Echelon Shifts**, and what constitutes an *active* or *passive* use of a Talent or Specialty, are explained in **Chapter II: Vs The World**

It's important to keep in mind that Talents do not represent the whole of a Hero's proficiencies, merely those significant enough to warrant a modifier to the relevant Attribute.

Heroes in Phaserip are assumed generally competent in any activity suggested by their Primary Attribute Echelons and need not, for example, possess the Athletics Trait to climb a tree or the Vehicles Trait to drive a car. An especially agile Hero is capable of performing acrobatic stunts. A Hero with high Reason is good with computers, and a capable scientist. Talents represent expertise above and beyond what a Hero's Attributes reflect.

ACADEMICS

The Hero is a scholar, well-read and devoted to learning.
Specialties: Anthropology, Archaeology, Business, History, Law, Mathematics, Politics, Philosophy, Psychology, Teaching

ART

The Hero possesses creative skills or a trained appreciation of beauty and aesthetics.
Specialties: Art, Cooking, Dance, Fashion, Illustration, Music, Performance, Photography, Poetry, Sculpture, Weaving

ATHLETICS

The Hero is trained in sports and physical feats.
Specialties: Acrobatics, Biking, Climb, Parkour, Ride, Rollerskating, Skate, (*Sport*), Skateboarding, Skating, Swim, Surfing

CHARM

The Hero is skilled in endearing themselves to and influencing others.
Specialties: Carouse, Etiquette, Negotiation, Performance, Savoir-Faire, Seduction

CHICANERY

The Hero is trained in using trickery and guile to manipulate or deceive others.
Specialties: Bluff, Disguise, Distract, Forge, Lie, Lock-picking, Pickpocket, Sneak

CIRCUS

The Hero grew up or travelled with a circus or carnival, learning a variety of unusual skills.
Specialties: Clown, Escapology, Illusionism, Juggling, Sleight-of-Hand, Tumbling

FARMBOY (or GIRL)

The Hero is experienced with various aspects of farming, including agriculture and horticulture.
Specialties: Agronomy, Animal Care, Gardening, Repair

MEDIC

The Hero is trained in diagnosing and treating ailments and injuries.
Specialties: First Aid, Folk Medicine, Nurse, Pharmacy, Psychiatry, Surgery, Vet

MILITARY

The Hero was trained by the armed forces, experienced with using military-grade armaments and vehicles.
Specialties: Artillery, Command, Demolitions, Dog-fighting, Tactics, Tanks

OCCULT

The Hero studies the paranormal, supernatural, and the Fortean sciences.
Specialties: Cryptozoology, Demonology, Folklore, Myth, Parapsychology, Theology

SCIENCE

The Hero is educated in the study of the structure and behaviour of the natural world through observation, experimentation, and analysis.
Specialties: Astronomy, Biology, Botany, Chemistry, Genetics, Neurology, Physics

SKULDUGGERY

The Hero is experienced in unscrupulous behaviour and crimes, usually of a violent or destructive nature.
Specialties: Arson, Burglary, Death Traps, Intimidation, Torture

SLEUTH

The Hero is a detective, skilled in investigating crimes and analyzing clues.
Specialties: Criminal Psychology, Forensics, Interrogation, Observation, Trail

SPY

The Hero is skilled in espionage, the so-called “Great Game”.
Specialties: Code-breaking, Counterintelligence, Infiltration, Stealth, Surveillance

SURVIVAL

The Hero is trained in sustaining themselves while living "on the rough", outside the conveniences of modern society.
Specialties: (*Environment)*. Forestry, Homesteading, Hunting, Mountaineer, Streetwise, Tracking

TECH

The Hero is adept at applied sciences, engineering and the design, construction and use of modern technology.
Specialties: Computers, Cybernetics, Electronics, Hacking, Mechanic, Robotics

VEHICLES

The Hero is skilled in the driving and maintenance of motor-vehicles.
Specialties: Astronavigation, Boat, Drive, Mecha, Motorcycle, Navigation, Pilot, Racing, Stunt Diver, Submarine

WEAPONRY

The Hero is trained in the effective employment of weapons in combat.
Specialties: Archery, Fencing, Firearms, Jousting, Throwing, (*Weapon*)

It is possible for a Hero to posses both a Talent and one or more associated Specialties, in which case it is customary to record the Specialties in parenthesis following the Talent, as such:

Science (Chemistry)

MASTERY

There are cases where a Hero's ability in one particular Skill or Specialty far exceeds the relevant Attribute. Heroes who are the best in the world at one particular thing, and a simple modifier is insufficient to exemplify this ability. The Mastery rule exists to represent this concept.

When a Hero possesses *Mastery* in a Trait, this is delineated by the **Shebang Notation!** (essentially an exclamation mark added to the name).

So the Talent **Science***, for example, becomes* **Science!**

Whenever a roll is made using that Trait, the Hero is treated as possessing the Echelon of **Incredible** in the applicable Attribute.

NEGATIVE TALENTS

(optional rule)

Sometimes a Hero is specifically untalented or exceedingly unskilled at a particular Talent or Specialty that it creates a notable **Disadvantage** for the Hero in applicable situations. The Trait in question is noted with a negative modifier.

So the Specialty **Computers***, for example, becomes* **Computers -1**

As the name implies, Negative Talents impose a penalty when the Hero attempts a related roll instead of a bonus.

STANDARD TRAITS
(optional rules)

Standard Traits are categories shared by every Hero and are mostly descriptive in nature. They are there primarily to help the player envision their character, though sometimes they provide bonuses as per Talents and Specialties.

ORIGIN

A Hero's Origin is the source of their abilities, mundane or superhuman. A Hero may optionally choose a **Secret Origin**.

CALLING

A Hero's Calling is their primary motivation or *Raison d'Etre* for engaging in heroic activities. Multiple Callings often apply to a Hero, and taken together are a part of the whole character, but a Hero's Calling is the specific instigation that caused them to adopt a Heroic identity or life.

STATURE

A Hero's stature defines their build, physique, and demeanour. Statures are not assigned any specific measurements, just a general idea of how a Hero stands, moves, and appears to others.

CULTURE

A Hero's Culture describes their social or ethnic background. A Culture may be as specific or general as appropriate, and while more than one Culture may apply, Players should chose the biggest influence on the Hero's personality.

> **Examples**: Asgardian, Atlantean, Australian, Beatnik, British, Cajun, Canadian, Chav, Chinese, Flapper, Geek, German, Goth, Gypsy, Hipster, Hyperborean, Irish, Japanese, Jewish, Martian, Metalhead, New Yorker, Norse, Olympian, Quaker, Roman, Russian, Scene Girl, Scottish, Texan

OCCUPATION

A Hero's Occupation delineates what they do for a living. It can be employed as a Talent or Specialty during play, so It's not necessary for a Hero to list additional Talents or Specialties that are logically implied by their Occupation.

CR-RACK!

ORIGIN

ADEPT

The Hero's physical or mental capacities are honed to the peak of human ability.
Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, Remo Williams, Sherlock Holmes

ALIEN

The Hero is not native to our planet or dimension.
Pop-Culture Examples: Doctor Who, Howard the Duck, Superman

ALTERED

The Hero's physiology was transformed by some unique occurrence.
Pop-Culture Examples: The Flash, Hulk, Spider-man

ANOMALY

The Hero developed superhuman abilities via genetic mutation or heredity.
Pop-Culture Examples: Gen 13, Liz Sherman, X-Men

ENHANCED

The Hero's abilities are modified or augmented by advanced technology.
Pop-Culture Examples: Inspector Gadget, Iron Man, Robocop

LEGEND

The avatar or reincarnation of a mythic deity or euhemerized folklore Hero.
Pop-Culture Examples: Hercules, Percy Jackson, Thor

SIX-OF-ONE

The Hero is an ordinary man or woman with no superhuman abilities.
Pop-Culture Examples: Buck Rogers, Indiana Jones, The Spirit

SUPERNATURAL

The Hero was altered by or possesses occult powers,
or belongs to a supernatural race.
Pop-Culture Examples: Ghost Rider, John Constantine, Red Sonja

SYNTHETIC

The Hero was built rather than born.
Pop-Culture Examples: Astroboy, Roger The Homunculus, The Vision

CALLING

ADVENTURE

Lives for excitement & challenge.
Pop-Culture Examples: Finn & Jake, Hawkeye, Plastic Man

AGENT

Works for an organization or government.
Pop-Culture Examples: Dana Scully, James Bond, Nick Fury

ASIMOV

"Programmed" to be a Hero.
Pop-Culture Examples: Astro Boy, Robocop

AVENGER

Dedicated to the pursuit of justice at all costs.
Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, Daredevil

BEAST

Struggles between a human and animal nature.
Pop-Culture Examples: Wolverine

CRUSADER

A dedicated champion or messenger for a cause.
Pop-Culture Examples: Bibleman, Wonder Woman

CURSED

An outcast, unable to live a normal life.
Pop-Culture Examples: The Demon, Hellboy, The Hulk

EXEMPLAR

Embodies the ideals of a nation, culture, or people.
Pop-Culture Examples: Captain America, Captain Canuck, The Shield

EXPLORER

Exalts in the joy of discovery and travel.
Pop-Culture Examples: Doctor Who, Mister Fantastic

GLORY

Motivated by fame, recognition, or notable victories in combat..
Pop-Culture Examples: Booster Gold

GUARDIAN

The protector of a people or place.
Pop-Culture Examples: Doctor Orpheus, Green Lantern

LEGACY

Follows a long line or family tradition of Heroes.
Pop-Culture Examples: The Phantom, Starman

LOST

Trapped in a world they didn't create.
Pop-Culture Examples: Buck Rogers, Howard the Duck

MENTOR

Looks to guide a new generation of heroes.
Pop-Culture Examples: Professor X, Yoda

MYSTERY

Inquisitive, loves to solve puzzles and uncover secrets.
Pop-Culture Examples: Sherlock Holmes

REBEL

Struggles against an evil and oppressive authority.
Pop-Culture Examples: Longshot, Mister Miracle, Robin Hood

REDEMPTION

Seeks forgiveness or penance for past wrongdoing.
Pop-Culture Examples: Hercules, The Shadow

RESPONSIBILITY

An acute awareness of the burden of power.
Pop-Culture Examples: Spider-man, The Strobe

SLAYER

Devoted to hunting a particular enemy.
Pop-Culture Examples: Blade, Buffy Summers, Mister Monster

SOLDIER

For you The War never ended, just changed shape.
Pop-Culture Examples: Frank Castle, John Rambo, Mack Bolan

STATURE

Image I-12

AVERAGE

The Hero is neither fat, thin, tall nor short.
Pop-Culture Examples: Arthur Dent, Dave Lister,

BRAWNY

The Hero is massive, brimming with muscles and raw upper body strength.
Pop-Culture Examples: She-Hulk, The Savage Dragon, Thor

CURVY

The Hero is voluptuous, curvaceous and possibly buxom.
Their walk is a dance, their laugh a song.
Pop-Culture Examples: Medusa, Tom Bombadil

DASHING

Dynamic and stunning, the Hero moves with confidence, grace, and style.
Pop-Culture Examples: Galadriel, Hal Jordan, James Bond

FERAL

Bristling with intensity, the Hero prefers to crouch rather than stand, giving the impression of a wild animal.
Pop-Culture Examples: Beast Boy, Tarzan, Wolverine

GAUNT

The Hero is tall, thin, and lanky.
They loom instead of stand, stride instead of walk.
Pop-Culture Examples: Lurch, Slender Man,

HULKING

"Huge" is this Hero's prevailing feature, dwarfing those around them.
They stumble through a world too small and delicate for them.
Pop-Culture Examples: Concrete, The Hulk, The Thing

LITHE

The Hero is slender and lissome, moving with adroitness and ease.
Pop-Culture Examples: Chiana, Raven, Spider-man

SHIFTING

The Hero's body is constantly altering in size and shape.
Pop-Culture Examples: Jake the Dog, Plastic Man, Swamp Thing

SLEIGHT

The Hero is thin and skinny, possessing the diminutive
or undeveloped form of an adolescent.
Pop-Culture Examples: Kitty Pryde, Nancy Drew, The Venture Bros.

STALWART

The Hero seems as if carved rather than born.
They move with deliberation, and are at the peak of athletic prowess.
Pop-Culture Examples: Captain America, Superman, Wonder Woman

STOUT

The Hero is short and a bit portly. They may be an experienced veteran who let themselves go in the middle a bit, or simply prone to a heavier frame.
Pop-Culture Examples: Bilbo Baggins, Blue Beetle, Dum-Dum Dougan

XENOFORM

The Hero's body type is completely alien, incapable of passing for human.
Pop-Culture Examples: Groot, Insect Queen, Rygel XVI

Note that this list is not comprehensive, a player can choose any descriptor they feel best fits their Hero's form.

SPECIAL TRAITS

Whereas Talents, Specialties, and Standard Traits all function the same, providing a bonus to a Hero's roll in applicable situations, Special Traits are characteristics that describe unique benefits or limitations of Heroes.

ALTER EGO
AMNESIA
AMPHIBIOUS
ANIMAL KEN
ANACHRONISM
AQUATIC
BATTLE REFLEXES
BERSERKER
BLIND FIGHTING
BOFFIN
BOOKWORM
BUTTERFINGERS
CLONE
COSMIC SENSE
DEXTEROUS
DISABLED
IMPAIRED
FAITH
FAST DRAW
FEARLESS
FEY
FLEE
FRIGHTFUL
GEARHEAD
GREEN THUMB
GUN BUNNY
HARD LUCK
HEARTBREAKER
HIVE MIND
HYPNOTISM
IMMORTAL
IRON WILL
JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES
KEEN SENSES
KENSEI
LAST OF MY KIND
LEADERSHIP
LIGHTNING REFLEXES
LUCKY
MARKSMAN
MARTIAL ARTS
MIMICRY
PHOBIA
POLYGLOT
QUICK-DRAW
ROYALTY
SCREAM QUEEN
SIXTH SENSE
SNOW BUNNY
TERROR
TOTAL RECALL
VOICE OF THE HIVE

Complete descriptions of Special Traits are found in **Appendix T**.

Players are encouraged to individualize Special Traits by renaming them to something specifically appropriate for their Hero.

WHY TAKE A DISADVANTAGE?

Several of the Special Traits represent distinct hindrances to a Hero, from minor annoyances to severe disabilities. Just as with Negative Talents, Special Traits are referred to as **Disadvantages**. A Hero is never forced to take a Disadvantage unless they occur naturally as a consequence of events in the game. For some players Disadvantages are seen as a punishment, while other players will see them as a role-playing opportunity, part of what makes their Hero interesting. While Phaserip is not the sort of game where disadvantages provide a currency in points to purchase or improve other characteristics, if the player is creating or Modelling a Hero, it's conceivable that a Disadvantage may be used as a "bargaining chip" balanced against a powerful Hero (see **Hero Creation**, below).

Moreover, if a situation occurs in the game where a Hero's Disadvantage directly affects a roll, the Hero can voluntarily fail instead of rolling in exchange for an extra point of Continuity, at the Judge's discretion (see **Chapter V: Excelsior**).

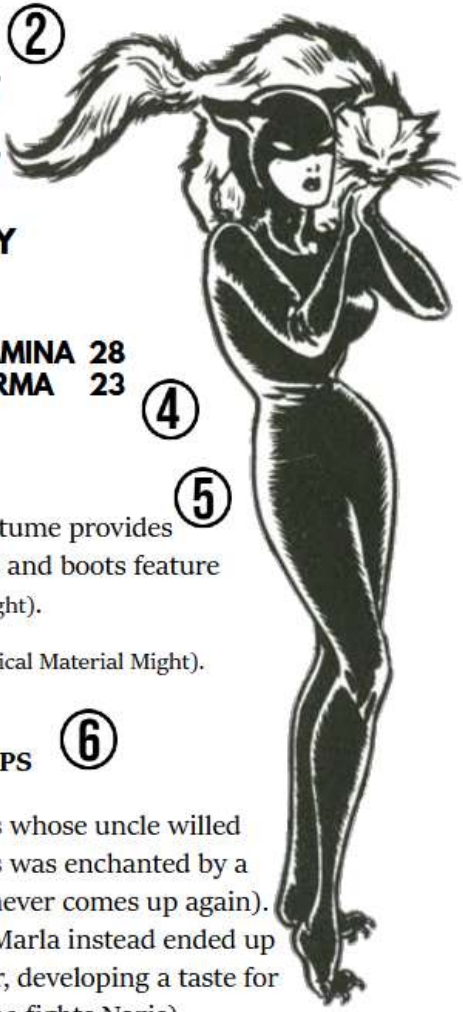
SOMEHOW, I'VE HAD NOTHING BUT MISFORTUNE SINCE MY UNCLE LEFT ME THE BLACK LEOPARD SKIN! IT HAD BEEN A WITCH DOCTOR'S CEREMONIAL ROBE AND WAS REGARDED AS A SYMBOL OF JUSTICE BY THE TRIBE. THEY CLAIMED IT HAD STRANGE POWERS AND WORKED MIRACLES..
'THOUGH OFTEN AS BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE! HMPH! IF THE THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED TO ME ARE BLESSINGS, THEY CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN WELL DISGUISED!

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Let's take a look at a typical Hero profile, in this case for Miss Fury aka The Black Fury. Miss Fury first appeared in 1941 and is identified as the first female superhero created by a woman, the talented artist and writer June Tarpé Mills.

MISS FURY ①

Secret Identity: Marla Drake **Origin**: Adept **Calling**: Adventure
Stature: Dashing **Culture**: Socialite **Occupation**: Designer

② 

FIGHTING	GOOD
AGILITY	EXCELLENT
STRENGTH	TYPICAL
ENDURANCE	EXCELLENT
REASON	TYPICAL
INTUITION	LEGENDARY
PSYCHE	GOOD

RESOURCES	LEGENDARY	STAMINA	28
RENOWN	GOOD	KARMA	23
CONTACTS	TYPICAL		

③ ④

PARAPHERNALIA ⑤

PANTHER SUIT – Miss Fury's costume provides Puny Body Armour, and the gloves and boots feature claws (Puny Damage, Good Material Might).

WHIP – Leather (Feeble Damage, Typical Material Might).

TRAITS ⑥

FASHION SAVOIR-FAIRE WHIPS

Marla Drake was a wealthy heiress whose uncle willed her a panther skin suit legend says was enchanted by a Witch Doctor (this detail literally never comes up again). Donning the costume for a party, Marla instead ended up helping recapture an escaped killer, developing a taste for adventure...and justice! (Mostly, she fights Nazis).

① A Hero's profile starts with **Standard Traits**, providing an overview of their character. We see from Miss Fury's *Origin* that she is a highly-skilled individual, and her *Calling* indicates that her primary motivation for engaging in heroics is the thrill of adventure. Marla Drake cuts a *Dashing* figure and, when not engaged in heroics, is a fashionable figure in High Society.

② From Miss Fury's **Primary Attributes** we can see that she is a decent *fighter*, extremely *agile* (comparable to an acrobat), and is tougher than one might expect based upon her background. Though not scientifically-minded, her unusually high *Intuition Echelon* suggests a natural talent for detective work.

③ Miss Fury's **Secondary Attributes** give us a look at her external assets. She is considerably wealthy, befitting her status as one of the social elites. Miss Fury has a decent reputation, but not as high as a Hero that deliberately courts public opinion and good press. And though she prefers to operate independently, Miss Fury has an average chance of finding a potential ally when necessary, most likely by way of her wealthier social circles.

④ Miss Fury's **Factors** leads to a starting *Stamina Pool* of 28 (Gd [5] Fighting + Ex [10] Agility + Ty [3] Strength + Ex [10] Endurance) & a starting *Karma Pool* of 23 (Ty [3] Reason + Lg [15] Intuition + Gd [5] Psyche).

⑤ Miss Fury's **Special Attributes** are limited to *Paraphernalia*, as she possesses no superhuman powers. In this case her two most common accoutrements are her panther suit and whip. Note that her cat claws and whip are assigned Echelons according to their **Damage** and **Material Might**, concepts explained when discussing objects and weapons in **Chapter II: Vs The World** and **Chapter IV: Tools of the Trade**.

⑥ Finally, we come to Miss Fury's **Traits.** Marla lives on the cutting edge of Fashion (one of the unique aspects of her original comics run was the inclusion of paper dolls with numerous outfits), and she has an advantage in situations that call for etiquette and grace. Miss Fury also possesses the Whips *Weapon Specialty* (The comic doesn't detail how she acquired her skill with a whip, but perhaps it explains why she thought a leather cat suit was appropriate party attire).

HERO CREATION

Now that we've gone over what the various elements of a Hero and how to read a Hero's Profile, the first step for any player is to start the game is to acquire a Hero for them to portray. Phaserip provides three options for this.

PREGENS

The simplest and quickest option is for players to use a pre-generated Hero, ("Pregen"). Ready-Made Hero files are provided in **Appendix A** and Profiles for other Heroes are available on the Phaserip website.

This option is best for new players still learning the system.

MODELLING

The more involved method allows players to create original Heroes or adapt Heroes from other media. Hero Modelling is considering the default creation system for Phaserip and is detailed in this Chapter.

Freeform Modelling allows the player to work with the Judge to bring an original creation of the player to life. **Modelling an Existing Hero** follows much the same procedure, but accounts for translating existing media sources (or at least those that the player prefers to consider personal canon).

This option is best for experienced players who already know what sort of Hero they want to play.

RANDOM

A third optional form of Hero Creation is provided in **Appendix C**. Random creation, as the name implies, generates new Heroes through a series of dice rolls and player choices.

This option is best for experienced players who don't know what sort of Hero they want to play.

HERO MODELLING (FREEFORM)

"Freeform" is the simplest method of Hero creation, whereupon the player simply writes up a description of their Hero and the GM assigns it the appropriate characteristics to create a Hero Profile. This simple process follows three general steps:

I. STEP ONE – THE PITCH

The player describes the Hero they want to play. This could be an established character from fiction or an original creation.

When writing The Pitch, the Player should be explicit about the Hero's abilities and weaknesses. The following list of questions is a guide for things that the player might consider.

How did they become a Hero?

What is their motivation for engaging in Heroics?

What does the Hero look like?

What is the Hero's life like when not engaged in Heroics?

What is the Hero's social position?

How does the Hero discover criminals/crimes?

How does the Hero get around?

What are the Hero's powers or skills?

How does the Hero fight?

How does the Hero defend themselves?

How does the Hero fund their activities?

What is the Hero's relationship with authorities?

How does the public perceive the Hero?

II. STEP TWO – THE CATCH

Once the player provides a description of The Hero, the Judge takes the Pitch and uses it to draw up a Hero Profile, assigning Echelons, Special Attributes, and Traits as appropriate.

A variation on this for players that are very familiar with the rules is for the player to come up with a preliminary Hero Profile to accompany The Pitch.

III. STEP THREE – THE CALL

At this point, a period of negotiation may take place as the player may ask for adjustments, or clarify aspects of their intentions for their Hero. While the Judge is entitled to make the final call as to what is appropriate for the game, likewise their is no obligation for a player to play a Hero that they are unhappy with.

Generally there is a great degree of leeway in regards to accommodating the Player realizing their creation and amenable compromises to make certain the Hero will fit the campaign premise.

A "bargaining chip" that that both the player and Judge may use during this negotiation is the introduction of **Disadvantages**, **Limitations**, and **Weaknesses**.

> **DISADVANTAGES** are Negative Talents or Special Traits that are hindrances in specific situations. The more frequently that a Disadvantage interferes with the Hero's life, the more potent or severe the drawback it is considered.
>
> **LIMITATIONS** are restrictions or constraints on the use of a Hero's Powers.
>
> **WEAKNESSES** are unique physical vulnerabilities, allergies, or anathema that may be used against the Hero.
>
> Disadvantages were already discussed in regards to Special Traits, while Limitations and Weaknesses are detailed in **Chapter III: Thus Spake Zarathustra**.

Essentially the idea is that if an aspect of the Hero is considered "too powerful" by the Judge for the campaign, then the player can take on a commensurate flaw or restriction as an offset or compromise.

FREEFORM EXAMPLE

Like most of us who grew up reading comics, I filled many notebooks and sketchbooks in my preadolescence with numerous superheroes that poured out of my young imagination. For the purposes of this illustration let me call up one of my weirder concepts and pitch him as a Hero for the game.

My Hero is called "**Stentor**", named for the obscure Greek mythical Hero that whose distinguishing feature is a "voice as powerful as fifty voices of other men". He apparently died in a shouting match with Hermes. It seems distinctly like there's more to that story, but sadly Stentor's full tale did not survive past antiquity, his only legacy is giving his name to the somewhat archaic adjective "stentorian", meaning "loud-mouthed".

I'm not sure why my young mind made the association between sonics and dolphins, but my Stentor was in fact a dolphin. An alien intelligent dolphin with psychic abilities (I don't know if The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy was an influence here, as I honestly can't recall where on my personal timeline, in reference to the conceptualization of Stentor, that Douglas Adams entered my awareness).

Rather than evolving arms and legs, these aliens still just look like regular dolphins, so to get around Stentor is encased in a transparent oval container filled with water, with mechanical arms and legs attached, attuned to Stentor's psychic commands, as well as a voice-box that translates for him.

Also he throws boomerangs and has an Australian accent. I don't know why.

To prepare the Pitch for Stentor, the player would consider how best to describe his abilities and character. In this example, the player uses the questionnaire provided a few pages back jas a structure to hand the pitch on. This isn't necessary, they could just write a few paragraphs, write him up an entry in the style of one of those comic books that are compilations of character profiles superhero publishers put out occasionally, or even stat him up in another RPG system. Or simply sit down and discuss it with the Judge.

Presented here is both the player's answers to the questionnaire and the dialogue between the Judge and the player in response.

How did they become a Hero?
Stentor is an alien resembling a dolphin, originating from Arion, a planet orbiting the star Musica in the Delphinus Constellation. The Arions' society is divided into non-hierarchical classes-based upon psychic abilities. As a telepath, Stentor is part of the 'ambassador class', those whp travel off-world to engage with other species as part of C.O.G. – The *Commonwealth of Galaxies*, an inter-planetary peace initiative that protects developing worlds while they advance towards a possible space-faring society. Stentor is part of a team devoted to protecting The Earth from interstellar threats from their base on Despina, one of Neptune's moons, occasionally travelling to Earth to deal with alien threats.

What is their motivation for engaging in Heroics?
An idealist and optimist, Stentor sees himself as Earth's protector.

What does the Hero look like?
Stentor looks like an ordinary Dolphin, but encased in an exo-suit that appears as a clear oval casing (made of a translucent alien metal),filled with a synthetic liquid that sustains him and provides nutrients (so he doesn't need to eat). There are robotic arms and legs attached to the oval, and in the front centre is a large voice box that automatically translates Stentor's Dolphin noises into different languages (it also focuses Stentor's supersonic scream).

What is the Hero's life like when not engaged in Heroics?
Stentor doesn't really have a "normal life" outside of his assignment. He can't pass for human, so no secret identity. Probably plays in pools when not on duty.

What is the Hero's social position?
Human society overall isn't aware of his existence. C.O.G. agents are generally well-esteemed by peaceful space-faring civilizations, but have no authority beyond the parameters of their mission.

How does the Hero discover criminals/crimes?
Stentor has a device that can track alien life forms.

How does the Hero get around?
An egg-shaped dropship gets C.O.G. agents from the moonbase to planetside.

What are the Hero's Powers and/or skills?
Stentor can emit a high frequency sonic blast that stuns or knocks down opponents. He is a telepath and can read thoughts and communicate mentally. He is highly intelligent and uses advanced alien technology.

How does the Hero fight?
Stentor can produce a high-frequency sonic blast that issues from his exo-suit's voicebox, He also uses boomerangs that deliver a stunning electric shock. He also carries containment cubes – normally the size of dice, but when activated can expand into laser boxes to subdue alien threats, placing them in stasis.

How does the Hero defend themselves?
Stentor's suit is immune to most handheld weaponry, and he is extremely quick.

How does the Hero fund their activities?
Stentor hails from a post-scarcity civilization with no economic functions.

What is the Hero's relationship with authorities?
In Space? Very good. Not so much on Earth.

How does the public perceive the Hero?
They don't, hopefully. Stentor operates in secret.

The Judge then uses this Q&A provided by the player to create a Hero Profile.

STANDARD TRAITS

Standard Traits are a good place to start, providing a good overview of the Hero. Origin and Stature are easy choices, *Alien* and *Xenoform* respectively. Occupation is "C.O.G. Agent". Calling is a little trickier as several could fit, but the Judge determines "Guardian" is the most appropriate.

Real Name: unpronounceable **Origin**: Alien **Calling**: Guardian
Stature: Xenoform **Culture**: Arion **Occupation**: C.O.G. Agent

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES

Stentor seems to rely on ranged attacks and dexterity primarily, so the Judge sets Fighting at *Typical*, and Agility at *Excellent*. The cyber-arms of the exo-suit are likely pretty strong, but that will be covered later. Just thinking about Stentor's natural Dolphin form, the Judge assigns him *Puny* Strength, but gives *Excellent* Endurance, assuming a space-faring Dolphin race is probably pretty hale and hardy.

For Stentor's Mental Attributes, the Judge notes the emphasis on Stentor's intelligence and use of alien tech, and gives a generous Reason of *Legendary*. Nothing in the description specifically references Intuition, but figures a competent hunter of hidden aliens probably has at least *Good* Intuition. And Stentor comes from a psychically-awakened species and was presumably trained to use his telepathy in his role as part of the Arion Ambassador Class, so the Judge sets Psyche at *Uncanny*.

F	A	S	E	R	I	P
TY	EX	PU	EX	LG	GD	UC

FACTORS

Since Factors are based simply on calculations from the Primary Attributes, the Judge tackles these next. The sum of the Echelon Ratings of Stentor's Physical Attributes is **25** (TY [3] + EX [10] + PU [2] + EX [10]), and the sum of his Mental Attributes is **45** (LG [15] + GD [5] + UC [25]). So Stentor's starting Stamina is 25, and Karma is 45. The campaign also uses the **Continuity** Factor, each Hero starting with 1 point.

SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES

Coming from a post-scarcity alien society, Stentor doesn't even understand the concept of money, so assigning him any Resources Echelon wouldn't make sense. The Judge skips it, and likewise sets starting Renown at *Minimal*, as this reflects the populace of Earth's impression of the Hero. The Judge could assign a separate Renown score for extraterrestrial interactions, but as the campaign is intended to take place on Terra Firma, they deem this unnecessary.

The Judge assigns Stentor an Excellent Contacts Echelon, with the specification that these Contacts are "extra-terrestrial".

STAMINA	**25**	**RENOWN**	**MINIMAL**
KARMA	**45**	**CONTACTS**	**EXCELLENT**
CONTINUITY	**1**		**(Interstellar)**

SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

There is a lot to consider here – Stentor's alien form, his expressed abilities, and the abilities granted to him by the exo-suit.

In this case, let's start with the intrinsic abilities of a space dolphin. *Hyper-Swimming* is an obvious one. And not a very powerful Power, so the Judge doesn't worry about unbalancing when handing it out. Looking up dolphins facts about dolphins, the Judge sees that they can reach swimming speeds of up to 29 KM/H or 18 mph, so the Judge assigns this an Echelon of *Good*.

Further reading reveals dolphins employ a form of underwater echolocation, like sonar, by emitting high frequency clicks from their uniquely evolved melons. The Judge thinks that this provides a good origin for Stentor's sonic blast, as an evolved defence mechanism (*combining/streamlining Powers as much as possible is usually the best practice*).

The Judge considers that there are two interpretations of the Stentor's power as described in The Pitch – that Stentor can naturally create a Sonic Blast, and the suit simply enhances it, or that Stentor's high-frequency sonar power is "weaponized" by the voicebox into a Sonic Blast. Though the Judge expects the player intended the former, the latter allows the Judge to ascribe a higher Echelon to the Sonar Power without unbalancing the Hero.

It's important to remember that Hero Modelling is more of an Art than a Science. Phaserip tries to provide structure, but it's ultimately relying on the interactions of the imaginations of both the Judge and the Player.

For those seeking a purely mechanical approach to Hero Creation, this is why the Random Creation option is offered in Appendix C. Random Creation is more structured, but also less flexible.

Stentor's next identified Power is Telepathy, used to control the suit and intrinsic to Stentor's role as Ambassador, the Judge assumes it is at least *Good*. He goes with the minimum here, as Stentor possesses a pretty varied Power set already.

Then there is the suit itself. In this case, the Judge is not using the advanced rules for Power Armour found in **VI: More Human Than Human**, so they are simply going to model the suit as a collection of Quirks (see "Modelling Powers" in **Chapter V: Excelsior**). As the exo-suit is at the least bulletproof and was probably designed for space battles with advanced weaponry. That suggests to the Judge Armour somewhere near the *Legendary* Echelon range. Moreover, Stentor is rendered physically extremely vulnerable without it, so there is an inherent weakness that induces the Judge to go with a higher Echelon, *Uncanny*.

Next, the Judge considers the mechanical limbs. These aren't described as possessing any special abilities beyond their functions as appendages, but the Judge already decided that they would enhance Stentor's Strength, boosting it to Excellent, and the legs allow Stentor to recreate his Excellent Agility on land.

There are two conceptually related functions of suit's voicebox: translating Stentor's dolphin sounds into various languages (with an Australian accent), and translating Stentor's high-Frequency Sonar clicks into Sonic Blasts. The first function doesn't require an Echelon, it acts just as per the Special Trait Polyglot. (The Sonic Blast is noted as "Stentorian Yell" to give it a more thematic name.)

Finally, the Judge considers what other abilities are potentially indicated by the suit. He could theoretically ascribe to it "standard" functions like long-range communications, sensors, etc. But those don't seem thematic, and since they were not mentioned in The Pitch, the Judge discounts it. One thing The Pitch does mention though is that the suit provides nutrients, suggesting Life-Support functions, which the Judge sets at *Uncanny*.
That leaves three other bits of Paraphernalia carried by Stentor: the Electric Boomerangs, a device that tracks Aliens, and the Containment Cubes.

The boomerangs are pretty simple, the Judge just looks up the stats for a boomerang in **Appendix W**, increasing the listed Material Might slightly to represent "translucent alien metal", and adds a "Stun" feature. Likewise the Alien Tracker is a simple handheld device with a single function, the Judge just assigns it an Echelon for Range.

The Containment Cubes are a conundrum, however. They need to perform their function of imprisoning Alien threats, potentially ones that might otherwise overshadow Stentor in Powers, but it can't simply be a "Get You Into Jail Free Card" or why would Stentor use any other attack, or even have to struggle.

The Judge's eventual solution to this dilemma is to place a time limitation on the Cubes' function; the cube needs one full Panel of time to assess the size and abilities of the threat before it expands to encapsulate them. So Stentor needs to defeat the Alien first, before using the Cubes. Like ghost-traps.

Before proceeding, a question occurs to the Judge:

Judge: *"Stentor is supposed to secretly hunt Aliens on Earth, without the populace aware of his existence. But he's also like an 8 foot Dolphin in a robot suit. How exactly is he not noticed?"*
Player: *"Um..maybe he has some kinda camouflage, like The Predator?"*
Judge: *"He turns invisible?"*
Player: *"Sorta, or what if it's more like a hypnosis ray that the suit emits that causes people not to notice him, or notice anything strange. So he can like walk around in a trench coat, and people think he looks like a nondescript human."*
Judge: *"A hypnosis ray so that humans don't notice him?"*
Player: *"Yeah, they just like naturally ignore him."*

Fortunately this concept already exists as a Power: **Mimesis**. Once the Judge finds that, he adds Mimetic Camouflage of *Excellent* to the suit's functions. Under normal circumstances, people in the vicinity simply won't notice Stentor. It is over-ridden if Stentor comes into conflict with them, and won't work on characters who are Psychically-aware. (*The possible associated trauma of finding out that one is psychically aware by seeing a ten foot robot suit piloted by a dolphin running around the city that no one else notices notwithstanding*).

TRAITS

The final elements of The Hero Profile that the Judge considers are Talents, Specialties, or Special Traits.. A Weapon Specialty for *Boomerangs* is obvious, followed by the Special Trait *Aquatic,* the Disadvantage for which Stentor's suit accommodates. The Judge also decides *Diplomacy* fits the Hero's role as ambassador. This gives Stentor 3 Traits and a completed Hero Profile.

Let's assume in this case that the Player is satisfied with The Judge's interpretation, even where they took liberties. The Player could negotiate for greater Telepathic ability, a Space Communications Array for the suit, or any number of other adjustments that the Judge may find minor enough to simply acquiesce to, or veto as too powerful, or compromise with an attendant Disadvantage, Limitation, or Weakness to offset the increase in Power.

STENTOR

Real Name: unpronounceable **Origin**: Alien **Calling**: Guardian
Stature: Xenoform **Culture**: Arion **Occupation**: C.O.G. Agent

FIGHTING	**TYPICAL**	**RENOWN**	**MINIMAL**
AGILITY	**EXCELLENT**	**CONTACTS**	**EXCELLENT (Extraterrestrial)**
STRENGTH	**PUNY**		
ENDURANCE	**EXCELLENT**		
REASON	**LEGENDARY**	**STAMINA**	**25**
INTUITION	**GOOD**	**KARMA**	**45**
PSYCHE	**UNCANNY**	**CONTINUITY**	**1**

POWERS

HYPER-SWIMMING (FANTASTIC)
SONIC BLAST (EXCELLENT)
TELEPATHY (GOOD)

EXO-SUIT

ARMOUR (UNCANNY)
ENHANCED STRENGTH (EXCELLENT)
LIFE SUPPORT (UNCANNY)
MIMETIC CAMOUFLAGE (EXCELLENT)
TRANSLATOR
    STENTORIAN YELL (EXCELLENT)

PARAPHERNALIA

XENOFORM DETECTOR (FANTASTIC)
CONTAINMENT CUBES (FA Nullification & Immobilization)
    Restriction: Only operates on willing or immobile target, takes one Panel to asses Target before activation)
ELECTRIC BOOMERANGS (FB Damage, EX MM, GD Stun)

TRAITS AQUATIC BOOMERANGS DIPLOMACY

Image I-17
(Stentor, full page)

MODELLING AN EXISTING HERO

The process for converting an existing hero from fiction or media is mostly the same as that for an original creation. In a way it is much easier because there is an existing frame of reference, making the Pitch for the player simpler and the Judge doesn't need to rely so much on interpretation. However, this approach comes with it's own set of considerations .

The most important concern for the player is how to convey their preferred interpretation of an existing Hero. Many Heroes, especially longstanding icons, are the product of numerous interpretations by different authors and artists across different media, ranging from stylized camp to gritty hyper-realism.

> ***As readers or viewers, we know inherently that the Wombatman who patrols the dark alleyways of Gothica City, fighting insane clowns and bird-themed gangsters, is a slightly different character than the Wombatman who teams up with living gods in tights to fight extraterrestrial planetary threats, and both are likewise strikingly inconsistent with the swinging sixties Wombatman who carries a can of manta-ray repellent spray in his utility belt and deals inefficiently with explosive devices.***

Not all interpretations will fit the Judge's campaign expectations or play well with the other players' heroes. Phaserip encourages striving for **Adaptation Distillation**, the simplifying of a Hero's (possibly very convoluted) canon representations to a streamlined and iconic core concept.

The way I usually pitch it to my players is to ask them to imagine that they are interpreting the character as if for an animated series adaptation. To this end, convoluted continuities are rewound, anachronistic elements are discarded or updated, and power sets are streamlined. On occasion a Hero is de-powered to expand the variety of credible threats they face, or to fit the setting.

The best way to explain is to show, so here we'll do another example of Hero creation, this time with the player looking to adapt the classic Golden Age Superhero "The Black Terror", who is conveniently in the public domain.

MODELLING EXAMPLE

In this example the player is already familiar with the Phaserip system, so as their Pitch they simply model a preliminary Hero profile, following much the same process as the Judge in our previous example.

The player chose The Black Terror primarily just because they thought the costume looked cool, and because the lesser known Hero doesn't come with much baggage. in the form of elaborate histories or popular re-imaginings.

The Black Terror was created by Richard E. Hughes and Don Gabrielson for the 9th issue of Nedor's Exciting Comics in 1941. The player takes a look at The Black Terror's original comics run, making note of the Hero's powers and skills, and anything interesting that makes them unique. The Black Terror's public domain appearances span almost a decade of titles from 1941 to 1949 (all conveniently available free online at archival websites).

Almost instantly the player finds an element he wishes to discard. As was common in the Golden Age, The Black Terror was accompanied by an adolescent sidekick. It's not a motif that aged incredibly well. So goodbye Tim Roland.

The Black Terror's concept is relatively simple. Pharmacist Bob Benton is the target of a protection racket by gangsters. But in his spare time Benton is working on "a sort of tonic for run-down people" (assumedly a sort of energy drink). While working on this tonic he accidentally adds Formic Acid, "a fluid obtained from red ants". The vapours from this concoction grant Benton "the strength of a Hercules". Donning a black costume with a pirate skull emblem and a domino mask, The Black Terror is born, swiftly putting the gangsters out of business and delivering them to the police.

The Black Terror's early adventures focus on his one-man crusade against organized crime, but soon, like most of his contemporaries, Benton is off fighting Nazis and some rather grotesque Asian stereotypes, with the odd Mad Scientist, alien invasion force, and femme fatale thrown in for good measure.

The player writes down the occupation *Pharmacist* and *Super Strength*. A few issues later, Black Terror is revealed to possess "supersensitive ears", and the player makes a few notes under Super Strength such as "tears the door off a safe", "lifts a car with several people in it", and "tears a plane in half."

After a few more issues the player notes "Super Endurance? crashes through walls a lot, often shot at". The player considers whether or not The Black Terror possesses some form of natural armour, but the comic does show him getting knocked unconscious (more often than one would think) and earlier issues imply that he's vulnerable to a direct shot (though by later issues "the bullets don't even dent him").

Thinking about it, the player adds "high Initiative", as The Black Terror often acts before enemies can fire at him.

The Black Terror demonstrates Super Exhalation in one issue, but this is seemingly never mentioned again. The same is true with the supersensitive ears from earlier. As such, the player decides that these are more narrative contrivances than defining features of the Hero and dismisses them.

> *The player also took notes regarding Bob Benton's love interest and consistent supporting character,* **Jean Starr**. *As an Assistant District Attorney, and former secretary of the Mayor, (as well as a habit of spending all her free time hanging out in a drug store talking about confidential matters), Jean is a valuable* Contact *for The Black Terror, and occasional ally in his adventures.*

THE BLACK TERROR

Secret Identity: Bob Benton **Origin**: Altered **Calling**: Avenger
Stature: Stalwart **Culture**: American **Occupation**: Pharmacist

FIGHTING	**LEGENDARY**	**RESOURCES**	**GOOD**
AGILITY	**EXCELLENT**	**RENOWN**	**TYPICAL**
STRENGTH	**FANTASTIC**		
ENDURANCE	**FANTASTIC**	**STAMINA**	**105**
REASON	**EXCELLENT**	**KARMA**	**30**
INTUITION	**EXCELLENT**		
PSYCHE	**EXCELLENT**		

POWERS

INVULNERABILITY (FANTASTIC)

TRAITS **CHEMISTRY** **LIGHTNING REFLEXES**

CONTACTS **JEAN STARR**

In this example, we'll fold the Catch and the Call steps into one as the Judge looks over the submission with the Player and makes any necessary changes.

First off, while The Black Terror is a pretty good fighter, it doesn't originate from any significant training in martial arts or the military, and seems to manifest as an expression of his powers. He knows how to punch, and pull punches, but he isn't performing any complex self defence manoeuvres. So the Judge knocks Fighting down to *Excellent*.

Agility likewise seems too high – Benton displays no indication of acrobatics, and generally favours Close Combat. The Judge knocks this down to *Good*, but the player objects citing Terror's reflexes and feats, so they compromise at *Excellent*.

The Judge let's Strength stand at *Fantastic*, as it is The Black Terror's primary power, but looks askance at a *Fantastic* Endurance and Invulnerability.
Taken together this would make the Hero nigh impervious, which doesn't reflect The Black Terror's representations or the player's notes. The Judge takes some time to evaluate how tough The Black Terror actually is.

Bullets bounce off The Terror's chest, but he (mostly) actively avoids getting shot and can still get knocked out by a blow to the head (again, this happens surprisingly often), and he is shown as vulnerable to gas, drowning, and extreme temperatures (he is immobilized through freezing in one story).

On the other hand, facing these difficulties is generally an opportunity in the story for his sidekick to save him, and validate his worth, but since the player wants to discard that element, it's reasonable to make The Black Terror a bit tougher in order to operate on his own.

The Judge briefly considers other options, concluding that there is no reason to assume Terror's costume provides any Armour, and something like a personal Force Field doesn't seem in keeping with the Hero's concept.

Eventually the Judge proposes the following: Endurance and Invulnerability are knocked down to *Excellent*, with the Invulnerability power acquiring a **Limitation** that it applies to The Black Terror's enhanced musculature but not his head. Thus the Hero is mostly bulletproof and exceptionally hardy as a consequence of acquiring superhuman strength, but it's still possible for a lucky blow to knock him out.

The player initially objects as this is a significant reduction in power, but the Judge explains that Excellent Invulnerability is essentially equivalent to wearing a Kevlar suit, with very few weapons outside of military hardware capable of piercing The Black Terror's skin. Also by expanding the number of viable attacks that can affect the Hero it widens the potential for dramatic events that occur within the campaign. The player gives it some consideration before agreeing.

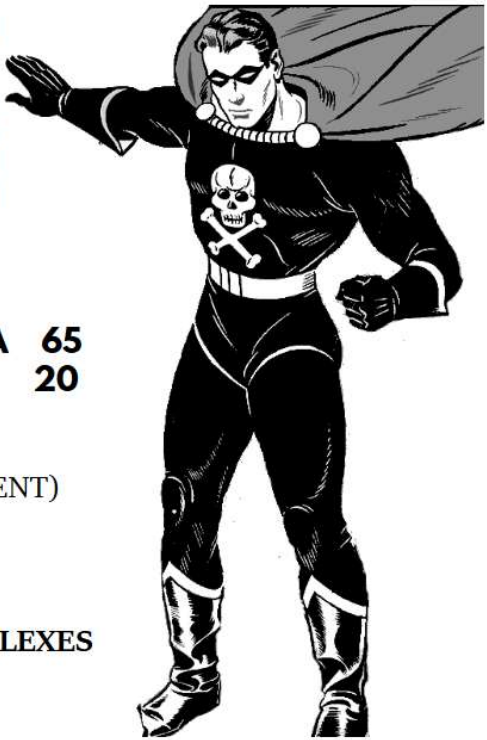
Reason of *Excellent* makes sense, as Bob Benton is a pharmacist and chemist, but the Judge knocks Intuition and Psyche down to *Good*. The player argues for higher Intuition because of The Black Terror's higher Initiative, but the Judge points out that the Special Trait *Lightning Reflexes* already covers that.

The player and Judge agree on every other characteristic as described, so the player need simply adjust the starting Stamina and Karma scores as appropriate, and the Judge stats up The Black Terror's contact, Jean Starr.

THE BLACK TERROR

Secret Identity: Bob Benton **Origin**: Altered **Calling**: Avenger
Stature: Stalwart **Culture**: American **Occupation**: Pharmacist

FIGHTING	**EXCELLENT**
AGILITY	**GOOD**
STRENGTH	**FANTASTIC**
ENDURANCE	**EXCELLENT**
REASON	**EXCELLENT**
INTUITION	**GOOD**
PSYCHE	**GOOD**



RESOURCES GD **STAMINA** 65
RENOWN TY **KARMA** 20

POWERS

INVULNERABILITY (EXCELLENT)
Limitation (Head)

TRAITS CHEMISTRY
LIGHTNING REFLEXES

CONTACTS JEAN STARR

JEAN STARR

Stature: Dashing
Culture: American
Occupation: Assistant D.A.

F	A	S	E	R	I	P
PU	TY	PU	TY	TY	TY	GD

STAMINA 10 **KARMA** 11

TRAITS POLITICS

SECRET IDENTITIES

Many Heroes maintain at least two separate identities, one in their heroic life and one for their private life. This dichotomy is one of the core elements of the Superhero genre. There are numerous practical reasons for a secret identity – it keeps friends and family safe from reprisals from villains, allows the Hero to engage in situations unnoticed, and generally allows the Hero the chance for a personal life free from the burdens of fame or notoriety.

When playing a Hero with a Secret Identity, the Secondary Attribute Renown typically only applies to a character's Heroic identity. However, you may optionally keep a separate Renown score for the civilian identity if they achieve some measure of popularity or widespread reputation.

In this case, Renown Rewards and Penalties are applied to one Renown score or the other as appropriate (see **Chapter II: Vs The World**).

If a Hero literally takes on another form (or is another person entirely), then this is covered by the Special Trait **Alter Ego** (see **Appendix T**). Most Heroes, however, rely on a change of clothes and mask, or some sort of disguise.

FILLING IN THE BLANKS

A Hero Profile serves as a general assessment of the Hero's capabilities, but there are many aspects to an individual that are not codified by rules. Players may use the following optional list of questions to flesh out their Hero:

HEROIC LIFE

What were the circumstances of your Origin?
What major life event influenced your Calling?
How do you contact other Heroes or vice-versa?
Where is the your base of operations?
Do you possess a headquarters, or secret meeting place?
How do you change into your costume?

PERSONAL LIFE

How do other people view your civilian identity?
Who knows your Heroic identity (if it's a secret)?
Who are your relatives; what role do they play in your life?
Are you involved in any romantic relationships? Who are your friends?
What do you do with your downtime? Do you have any hobbies?

WORK LIFE

Who do you work for and/or where do you work?
What are your career goals?
Who are the co-workers you interact with?
What would your co-workers say about you?
What education did you receive?
If independently wealthy, where did your fortune come from?

PERSONALITY

What was your childhood like?
Who was your role model growing up?
What makes you happy? What is your sense of humour?
What makes you sad? What do you do when you're sad?
What makes you angry? How do you express anger or frustration?
How do your powers reflect your personality?
Do you have any catch phrases?

An important consideration for Players to keep in mind when choosing or creating a Hero is that ultimately role-playing games are group activities and your Hero will, at least in most games, act as part of a team.

There are exceptions of course; single-player and solo-play; but these are less common. Generally it's safe to assume between three to six other players, including the Judge, and some Judges will accommodate many more.

Unfortunately, certain character types and personalities that are popular in fiction and media simply don't translate well into RPGs. Dark, brooding, anti-hero loners aren't actually that fun to hang around with, no matter how cool they may come across when the spotlight is only on them.

That isn't to say that all the Heroes in a group need to get along like best super friends; some inter party conflict and strife is what makes Lee and Kirby's FF or Giffen's JLI so entertaining and relatable. However, when the going gets tough, you can count on the Heroes to band together, help each other out, and work together towards a common goal.

To that end, players may consider Team Creation over each individually created their Heroes in isolation.

TEAM CREATION

Team Creation is a optional form of Hero creation that invites players to consider their larger role as part of a group and to create Heroes that compliment and/or are connected to each other. As the name implies, the players get together and proceed through Hero Creation as a group.

This may be utilitarian; the Judge may provide a list of abilities that are needed, and the players divide these up among themselves, or the players may simply want to make sure they cover their bases in regards to attack, defence, and versatile power sets. Alternately, the Heroes may create a team with a shared origin and theme.

Provided here are some examples of archetypal team dynamics commonly found in fiction and media which players can look to for inspiration.

THE DYNAMIC DUO

In the case of a game where are only two players, there are a lot of options available. Generally both Heroes are capable of acting independently, and the team-up is often a temporary occasion. There are, however, plenty of examples of long-term partnerships in Heroic fiction, through friendship or circumstance.

A classic variation on the partnership is the **Hero/sidekick dynamic**. Some players will not want to play a sidekick, understandably, but it creates an immediate bond and interwoven backstory for the Heroes. Sidekicks often possess the same general abilities and powers of the main Hero,.

A further variation on the Hero/sidekick dynamic is the **Mentor/Student**, wherein a more experienced Hero is training a new or young Hero.

Pop-Culture Examples: The Brave & The Bold, Butch Cassidy & The Sundance Kid, Cloak & Dagger, Marvel Team-up, Sherlock Holmes & Doctor Watson, World's Finest

THE COTERIE

This is another variation on the Hero/Sidekick dynamic wherein there is one powerful or omni-competant Hero and essentially a team of Sidekicks. Again, this will not suit the tastes of many player groups.

Pop-Culture Examples: Batman Family, Buckaroo Banzai, Doctor Who, Doc Savage, Nick Fury & His Howling Commandos, (Rick & Morty occasionally), Team Venture

THE TRINITY

A trio of Heroes is a popular ensemble wherein two of the Heroes are usually opposites (strong/slow and weak/fast, fire and water or ice, masculine and feminine), and the third is a balancing factor.

The Freudian Trio is patterned on the three parts of the Psyche: The Id, Ego, and Superego. The *Beauty/Brains/Brawns* Trio, the Heroes specialize in social skills, mental abilities, and physical aptitudes, respectively. Another variation is the mentor and two students, one naive, reserved and diligent, the other rebellious, stubborn, and cynical.

Pop-Culture Examples: Aqua Teen Hunger Force, Birds of Prey, Galaxy Trio, Invaders, Planetary, The Powerpuff Girls, Spider-man and his Amazing Friends, The Three Amigos

THE TEMPERAMENTS

The roles of the Heroes are patterned after the metaphorical associations of the four Greco-Roman Elements:

AIR - Intellectual, independent, and observant, but also obsessive. Often leaders and problem-solvers, with powers associated with adaptability.

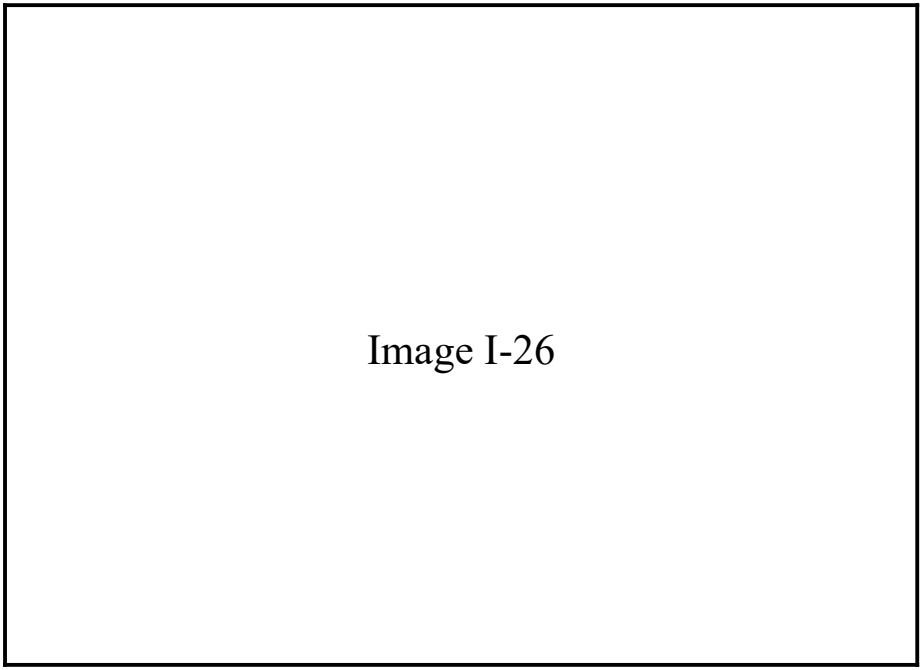
EARTH – Practical, loyal, and resilient, but also possibly stubborn and thick-headed. Tend to be the physical powerhouses of the group.

FIRE - Enthusiastic, energetic and quick-witted, but also impulsive and temperamental. Powers generally focused on dealing damage.

WATER – Empathetic, intuitive, and compassionate, but also possibly sensitive or weak-willed. Tends to posses healing or protective powers.

Ancient scholars and metaphysical types created numerous associations with the Classical Elements over the years - from the medieval four humours to the suits of a card deck – that players can look to for inspiration.

Pop-Culture Examples: Bubblegum Crisis, Clerks, Doom Patrol, Fantastic Four, The Ghostbusters, The Incredibles, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, W.I.T.C.H.



ACTION 5

Often the standard in Saturday Morning Cartoons, the “five man band” is organized by particular roles and personalities much like The Temperaments, but unlike The Temperaments, Heroes in an Action 5 group generally possess similar or shared ability sets, sometimes with one unique feature particular to each Hero, such as a Weapon Specialty or specific Talent.

THE LEADER – Earnest and driven, their passion generally sets the tone for the group as a whole.

THE LANCER - A direct contrast or counterpoint to The Leader. If the Leader is clean-cut and by-the-book, the Lancer is roguish and rebellious. If the Leader is brash and impulsive, the Lancer is level-headed and relaxed, etc.

THE BRAINS - The “smart guy” of the group, can be geeky and socially awkward or a playful prankster. Often forms a comedic pair with The Brawn.

THE BRAWN - The powerhouse of the group. Usually this is literal, with the Brawn being physically imposing, sometimes even a bit overweight. Also usually the oldest member of the group, tending to be easy going and practical, if a bit dim (essentially a recasting of the Earth Elemental).

THE FACE – The social butterfly of the group, charming and charismatic, though possibly also manipulative, mischievous or lecherous.

A variation or substitute for The Face is **THE HEART**. Often the token girl in media aimed at young boys, The Heart is the caretaker or spiritual core of the group, playing mediator between the Leader and Lancer, and possibly mother to the Brain and the Brawn.

Another variation is essentially The Temperaments with a fifth element added, such as The Heart, Soul, The Wild Card, etc. Here the distinction between The Temperaments and The Action 5 tends to get blurry, with a valid interpretation of the latter as essentially just a type of the former wherein the role of Air is split between The Leader and The Brain.

In some genres, the Action 5 can combine powers to summon a Hero or Mecha that can defeat foes far beyond their individual abilities.

Pop-Culture Examples: The A-Team, Captain Planet, The Delta State, The Invisibles, Power Rangers, Science Ninja Team Gatchaman, Silverhawks, Teen Titans, Voltron

TASK FORCE

The most versatile Team formation, wherein there are a large group of Heroes and specific members are assigned to missions based on any anticipated perils.

The team is large enough to accommodate extreme diversity amongst Hero abilities and players can switch between Heroes when the opportunity presents itself. In this case the player group creates multiple Hero Profiles a piece, providing a stable of options when assembling a task force. (*Of course, players are not obliged to switch between Heroes at any point, the larger team can simply serve as valuable allies and resources*).

Any of the previously mentioned roles of the Action 5 or The Temperaments are appropriate here, or Heroes can be grouped according to general combat roles:

THE STRIKER - The Close Combat specialist, focused on getting to a foe as quickly as possible and inflicting multiple attacks. Prioritizes speed over defence.

THE TANK – Soaks up attacks on the front line, protecting team mates while they maneuver to attack. The Tank often deals a heavy Close Combat blows themselves, but prioritize defence over speed.

THE BLASTER – Ranged attack support. Blasters whittle down opponents and establish control over terrain.

THE GLASS CANON – Capable of extremely powerful Ranged Attacks, but very low Defences.

THE MIND – Leader and strategist. They provide support and are generally well balanced between defence and either Close or Ranged Combat.

THE HEALER – Primarily a support role. Sometimes combined with The Mind or The Specialist. Prioritizes defence over offence or speed.

THE SPECIALIST – Limited attack and defence abilities, but brings unique abilities to the table that are essential in highly-specific situations.

These roles are very general and Heroes may mix and match, but usually there is an axis based on Close Combat Attacks, Ranged Combat Attacks, Defence, and Speed – any extreme in one area reduces efficiency in one or more of the others.

Pop-Culture Examples: The Avengers, The B.P.R.D., G.I. Joe, Justice League Unlimited, Knights of the Round Table, Outlaws of the Water Margin, The Suicide Squad, X-Men

POWER LEVELS

In the course of the two examples of Hero creation, we mentioned several times the concept of the Hero fitting the Campaign Setting. A player reading this might wonder “How do I know this?”

The simplest answer is that the Judge will tell you. The Judge will often make a pitch for a campaign much like a player when modelling a Hero. But this is the elevator pitch, there’s only so much information that a Judge can dump on players at once. If there are different understandings and experiences regarding the setting or genre of the game between Judge and player, this can cause confused expectations.

Not to make out that this is a bigger or more common issue than it is, rather acknowledge that Hero creation and meeting general player expectations for the campaign is much easier if the players and Judge are on the same page.

To aid in this, Phaserip offers the concept of **Power Levels (PL)** as a tool that Judges and players can refer to convey the types of Heroes that are appropriate and an aspect of the game’s genre.

DESK LEVEL

Tales of ordinary people inadvertently swept up into extraordinary circumstances where they are forced to play the Hero are common in media, especially in the comedy or horror genres. Desk Level Heroes possess Attributes up to Good and No Special Traits.

Pop-Culture Examples: Arthur Dent, Roger Wilco

ROOM LEVEL

Room Level is slightly elevated from Room Level, where supernatural or alien elements may exist, but it’s a level of subtlety that would not cause anyone to don a spandex suit and call attention to themselves. Room Level Heroes might possess an Attribute of up to Legendary, or possibly a Special Trait.

Pop-Culture Examples: Ash Williams, Howard The Duck,

STREET LEVEL

This is the most common level for Heroic stories. Heroes possess some level of advantage over the most of the population, and use this as a reason to fight evil (howsoever that might manifest). Enemies tend to be more human than not; crime syndicates, mobsters, ninja clans, etc. Street Level Heroes may possess superhuman Attributes up to Fantastic, though that is still rare, and usually Excellent to Uncanny is the range for the specific pre-eminences of a Hero. Special Traits are permissible, as are powers, magic, etc. (though these still tend towards a single power or small suite of related powers).

Pop-Culture Examples: Daredevil, Wesley Dodds

CITY LEVEL

This is the transitional Level, where Heroes have one foot in Street Level and the other in Planet level. Most A-List Superheroes extant in the Bronze Age fit in this category, staying around street Level when on their own and then slipping into Planet Level when they join a group, or during crossover events. City Level Heroes may possess Attributes up to Incredible (though Fantastic-Amazing is more common), along with multiple powers or a versatile range of advantages. Villains faced by City Level Heroes are generally colourful and varied.
Pop-Culture Examples: Batman, Spider-man

WORLD CLASS

The heavy-hitters of the superhero settings, regularly confronting potentially world-ending catastrophes and apocalyptic threats. World Class Heroes are far removed from humanity, seemingly stepped out of myth and the realm of the Gods. Some may possess Attributes of Unearthly, and a formidable power set. Enemies tend to originate from other worlds, feature individual villains with credible world-conquering ambitions, or involve massive natural disasters.

Pop-Culture Examples: Doctor Who, Superman, Thor

COSMIC LEVEL

Heroes too powerful for Earth to contain, Cosmic Level Heroes regularly face threats with repercussions across multiple worlds or dimensions. A majority of Attributes may extend beyond Unearthly, and their powers can reshape reality. As such, Cosmic Level encounters tend to ascend past physical combats,

Pop-Culture Examples:, Pre-Crisis Superman, Silver Surfer

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